



No.

Henry D. Bacon,  
St. Louis, Mo.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

GIFT OF



HENRY DOUGLASS BACON.

1877.

*Accessions No.* 18660 *Shelf No.*

My  
Henry D. Bacon













THE LIBRARY  
OF  
AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY  
CONDUCTED BY  
*Jared Sparks.*



THE DEATH OF FATHER RALE

BOSTON  
CHARLES CLITTLE AND JAMES PRYOR  
MDCCCLV



THE  
LIBRARY  
OF  
AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY.

---

CONDUCTED  
BY JARED SPARKS.

---

VOL. XVII.



BOSTON:  
CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN.  
NEW ORLEANS:  
ALSTON MYGATT.  
1848.

E 176  
. S 81  
V. 17

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1845, by  
CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN,  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.



# CONTENTS.

---

## LIFE OF JOHN RIBAULT.

BY JARED SPARKS.

Page.

*Preface.* . . . . . 3

### CHAPTER I.

*Discoveries of the French in America. — Ribault's first Voyage. — Lands at the River May in Florida. — Takes Possession of the Country. — Interviews with the Indians. — Sails along the Coast to Port Royal.* . . . . . 5

### CHAPTER II.

*Ribault explores the Country around Port Royal. — Builds Fort Charles. — Leaves a small Colony under Captain Albert. — Returns to France. — Distresses in the Colony. — Kindness and Assistance of the Natives. — The Colonists build a small Brigantine, and sail for France.* . . . . . 21

### CHAPTER III.

*Second Voyage to Florida. — Laudonnière. — Fort Caroline erected on the River May. —*

<i>Expeditions up the River. — Eagerness to obtain Gold and Silver. — Intercourse with the Natives. — Indian Wars. . . . .</i>	39
--	----

## CHAPTER IV.

<i>Discontent and Mutiny in Fort Caroline. — A Party of Sailors and Soldiers seize two Barks, and sail to the West Indies on a piratical Expedition. — Colonists distressed for the Want of Provisions. — Laudonnière resolves to return with his whole Company to France. — Difficulties with the Indians. — Sir John Hawkins. — Arrival of Ribault. . . . .</i>	60
---	----

## CHAPTER V.

<i>Third Voyage to Florida. — Ribault takes Command of the Colony. — Arrival of the Spanish Fleet under Menendez. — St. Augustine founded. — Ribault prepares to attack the Spanish Fleet. — Fort Caroline assaulted and taken by the Spaniards. — Slaughter of the French. — Laudonnière returns to France. . .</i>	81
--	----

## CHAPTER VI.

<i>Menendez returns in Triumph to St. Augustine. — Ribault's Vessels wrecked on the Coast of Florida. — Deplorable Condition of the French. — They attempt to find their way to Fort Caroline. — Met by Menendez, who refuses to grant them Terms of Surrender. — Ribault and his Companions massacred by the Spaniards. . . . .</i>	100
--	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

*Fourth Voyage to Florida under the Chevalier de Gourgues. — He lands at the River Somme. — Preparations, in Conjunction with the Indians, to attack the Spaniards on the River May. — March of the combined Forces. — Two small Forts attacked and captured. . . . 114*

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The French attack and capture Fort St. Matheo, and execute all their Prisoners, in Revenge for the Cruelty of the Spaniards. — De Gourgues marches back to the River Somme. — Sails for France. — Arrives at Bourdeaux. — Coldly received at the French Court. — His Services solicited by Queen Elizabeth and Don Antonio of Portugal. — His Death. . . . 132*

## APPENDIX.

*Account of the Books relating to the Attempts of the French to found a Colony in Florida. . 146*

## LIFE OF SEBASTIAN RALE.

BY CONVERS FRANCIS, D. D.

<i>Preface.</i> . . . . .	159
---------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER I.

<i>Rale's Birth and Education. — His Mission to the French Possessions in America. — Residence among the Abnakis. — Labor in learning their Language. — Notice of their Habits of Life.</i> . . . . .	163
---	-----

## CHAPTER II.

<i>Rale's Mission among the Illinois Indians. — His Stay at Mackinac, and Notes concerning the Indians there. — Arrival at Illinois River. — A Feast, and Eloquence of the Natives. — Their Habits. — Fruits of the Missionary's Labors.</i> . . . . .	173
--	-----

## CHAPTER III.

<i>Rale's Return to the Abnakis. — His Station at Norridgewock. — His Church and religious Services. — His own Habits of Living, and the constant Occupation of his Time. — Conversion of the Amalingans.</i> . . . . .	183
---	-----

## CHAPTER IV.

<i>New France and New England. — Territorial Claims of the French. — Disputes about these involving the Eastern Indians. — Their Com-</i>	
---	--

<i>plaints. — Influence of the Jesuits. — Rale's Remarks on the Attachment of the Indians to the Church. — Ascendency of the French over the Indians. . . . .</i>	196
---	-----

## CHAPTER V.

<i>War with the Eastern Indians. — Treaty at Pem- aquid. — Violation of it ascribed to French and Jesuit Influence. — The Sachem Bomaseen made Prisoner. — His Report of the Teaching of the Jesuits. — Excitement of the Massa- chusetts People. . . . .</i>	211
---	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

<i>French and English Claims after the Peace. — Uneasiness among the Indians. — Action of Massachusetts against the Jesuits and Popish Missionaries. — Conference between Governor Dudley and the Indian Sachems. — Different Accounts of it by Rale and Penhallow. — War renewed. — Rale's Chapel burned. — Peace, and Treaty with the Indians. — The Chapel rebuilt.</i>	223
--	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

<i>Governor Shute's Conference and Treaty with the Indians at Georgetown. — Reverend Joseph Baxter's Missionary Labors, and Correspondence with Rale. — Notice of Rale's Letter in Flynt's Common-place Book. — Protestant Mis- sionaries to the Eastern Indians. — Extracts from Baxter's Journal. . . . .</i>	244
---	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Rale's Letters to the Governors of Massachusetts.—Shute's Reply.—Hostile Disposition of the Indians.—Indignation of the People and Government of Massachusetts against Rale.—Choice of a new Chief among the Abnakis.—Difficulty and Irritation about Indian Hostages.—Letter from the Eastern Tribes to Governor Shute.—Letter from Vaudreuil to Rale. . . . 269*

## CHAPTER IX.

*Excitement against Rale.—Seizure of Castine.—Attempt to seize Rale.—His Dictionary of the Abnaki Language, and his Strong Box taken.—Account of these.—Proclamation of War by Governor Shute.—Vaudreuil's Letter.—Care of the Indians for Rale amidst his Perils.—His resolute Spirit. . . . . 288*

## CHAPTER X.

*Supposed Aversion of the Indians to War.—Rewards offered by the English for Rale's Person.—Captain Moulton's Expedition to Norridgwock.—The final Attack upon Norridgwock.—French and English Accounts of it.—Rale's Death.—Charges against him.—Correspondence between Dummer and Vaudreuil about him.—Monument to his Memory.—Remarks on his Character. . . . . 307*

## LIFE OF WILLIAM PALFREY.

BY JOHN GORHAM PALFREY, LL. D.

## CHAPTER I.

*Birth and Education. — A Patriot in his Teens. — Apprenticeship to Nathaniel Wheelwright. — Free American Fire Club. — Early Adventures in Trade. — A Freemason and Cadet. — Partnership and Courtship. — Voyage to Virginia. — Engagement with John Hancock. — Marriage. — New Arrangements of Business. — Letter to Hayley. . . . .* 337

## CHAPTER II.

*Schemes for Taxing the Colonies. — Discontent thereat in Boston. — Address of the Sons of Liberty to John Wilkes. — Business Connection of Palfrey with Colonel Harrison. — Reply of Wilkes to the Sons of Liberty. — Further Correspondence. . . . .* 346

## CHAPTER III.

*Opinions and Communications on passing Events. — Contributions to the Newspapers. — Correspondence with Wilkes. — Characters of eminent Contemporaries. — Account of Hutchinson. — Pause in political Movements. — Voyage to England. — Visits to London and Bristol. — Political Intelligence. . . . .* 363

## CHAPTER IV.

*Committees of Correspondence. — Letter from Colonel Harrison. — Intimacy with Henry Cruger. — Correspondence with George Rome. — Letter of Rome, transmitted with the Hutchinson Letters. — Arrival of the East India Company's Tea-Ships at Boston. — Journey to, and Letters from, New York and Philadelphia, on the Business of the Tea. . . . . 377*

## CHAPTER V.

*Letters on the Tea Case. — Letter from Charles Thomson. — Boston Port Bill. — Spirit of the Bostonians. — Indiscretion of the Ministry. — Encouragement from other Towns and Colonies. — First Continental Congress. — Voyage to South Carolina and England. — Its Object. — Arrival at Nantucket soon after the Battle of Bunker's Hill. . . . . 389*

## CHAPTER VI.

*Aid-de-Camp to General Charles Lee. — Arrest of Tories at Portsmouth. — Expedition to Rhode Island. — Capture of the Nancy Transport. — Chaplain at Cambridge. — Lee at New York. — Palfrey Aid-de-Camp to Washington. — The Army at New York. — Paymaster-General. — Official Relations. — Organization of the Department. — Invoices of Money. — Difficulty of adjusting Means to Ends. — Visit to Lord Howe. — Military Chest at*



<i>Kingsbridge. — Retreat through New Jersey — Imperturbable Temper of the Commander-in-Chief. — Capture of Lee. — Battle of Trenton, and Restoration of Affairs. . . . .</i>	402
---	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

<i>Illness of Washington. — Board of Auditors of Army Accounts. — Battles of Brandywine and Germantown. — Winter Quarters at Valley Forge. — New Board of War. — Improvements in the Pay Department. — Battle of Monmouth Court House. — Visit to New England. — Intention to resign. — Return to Boston. — Domestic Affliction. — Depreciation of the Currency, and consequent Perplexities in the Pay-Office. — Unanimous Election to be Consul-General in France. — Embarkation at Chester. — Character and Family. . . . .</i>	424
--	-----

CHAPTER I

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the subject. It begins with a definition of the term "philosophy" and then proceeds to a discussion of the various branches of the subject. The author then discusses the history of philosophy and the different schools of thought that have developed over the centuries.

CHAPTER II

The second part of the book is devoted to a more detailed examination of the various branches of philosophy. It begins with a discussion of metaphysics, which is the study of the nature of reality and the relationship between the mind and the world. The author then discusses epistemology, which is the study of knowledge and the methods of acquiring it. This is followed by a discussion of ethics, which is the study of moral principles and the good life. The author then discusses politics, which is the study of the organization of society and the role of the individual within it. Finally, the author discusses aesthetics, which is the study of art and the nature of beauty.

The third part of the book is devoted to a discussion of the various schools of thought that have developed over the centuries. It begins with a discussion of the ancient Greeks, who were the first to develop a systematic philosophy. The author then discusses the medieval philosophers, who were influenced by the teachings of the Church. This is followed by a discussion of the modern philosophers, who were influenced by the scientific revolution. Finally, the author discusses the contemporary philosophers, who are concerned with the problems of the modern world.

L I F E  
OF  
JOHN RIBAULT;

COMPRISING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST ATTEMPTS OF THE FRENCH  
TO FOUND A COLONY IN NORTH AMERICA ;

BY

JARED SPARKS.



## P R E F A C E .

---

THE following memoir necessarily comprises the double object of biography and history. In fact, it is not always easy to draw a line between the two. History, in its limited sense, is little else than a narrative of the prominent acts of the great leaders in a series of public events, with such reflections and inferences as may conduct the reader to a just estimate of the causes of these events, the character and motives of the actors, and the spirit and condition of the people who are brought to coöperate in their designs. JOHN RIBAUT was the pioneer of a great enterprise, undertaken by the French government for founding a colony in North America ; and although he was assisted by brave and able associates, yet his energy and zeal were the chief springs of the whole, and he sacrificed his life in an ineffectual effort to achieve its final execution. This enterprise, notwithstanding its failure, is the most remarkable in the early history of that part of America now included within the United States and

Canada, as well in regard to its objects as its incidents.

The particulars were narrated by several of the actors, and their fidelity is proved by their general accordance with each other, and by internal evidence. A brief notice of the original works, from which the materials for the memoir have been drawn, may be found in the Appendix.

# JOHN RIBAUT.

---

## CHAPTER I.

*Discoveries of the French in America. — Ribault's first Voyage. — Lands at the River May in Florida. — Takes Possession of the Country. — Interviews with the Indians. — Sails along the Coast to Port Royal.*

AMONG the remarkable events of American history, few are fraught with adventures more perilous, or scenes more romantic and tragical, than the first attempts of the French to form an establishment in the New World. As early as 1504, the fishermen of that nation frequented the seas and bays bordering upon Newfoundland and Canada; twenty years later, Verazzani, under a commission from the French king, sailed along the coast from Florida to the fiftieth degree of north latitude; and ten years afterwards, Jacques Quartier ascended the St. Lawrence to Hochelaga, the present site of

Montreal. In consequence of these discoveries, the French monarch claimed the right for his subjects to explore and inhabit such parts of the country as they might choose, notwithstanding the bountiful decree of the Pope, conferring the whole continent on the Spaniards, and the dormant claim of England, founded on the previous but uncertain discoveries of Sebastian Cabot.

In the mean time, although several voyages were performed to Canada, no effective plan of colonization seems to have been adopted till 1562. There was then no settlement of Europeans north of New Spain, or Mexico. Fifty years before, Ponce de Leon had discovered the eastern coast of Florida, from the thirtieth degree of north latitude to the Gulf of Mexico; he was followed by Vasquez de Aylon, Narvaez, Soto, and others, some of whom penetrated from the Gulf into the country, but they were driven away by the natives, and no settlement was formed. The Spaniards gave the name of Florida to the whole continent north of Mexico. Even to the English and French, the coast far northwards was known for many years by the same name; and Hakluyt, when he would tempt settlers to Virginia, by his translation of the Portuguese account of Soto's adventures, adorns it with the title, "Virginia richly valued, by the



Description of the Main-land of Florida, her next Neighbor.” Who could resist the attractions of a country so near the *Land of Flowers*? But it was more flattering to the French to call this coast New France, as they did for a time all parts of North America visited by their navigators.

It was in the reign of the inglorious monarch Charles the Ninth, or rather of his more renowned but not less inglorious mother, Catherine de Medicis, for the king was still a boy, that the scheme was first matured of sending a colony of Frenchmen to Florida. The kingdom was then distracted by the dissensions and deadly strifes between the Catholics and Huguenots, or Calvinists. The Admiral Coligni, a man of rank, ability, and influence, who had become a convert to the new religion, sought repose for his persecuted brethren by providing for them an asylum, where they might enjoy their religious faith in peace, beyond the reach of factious violence, and the frantic zeal of bigotry burning to destroy and exterminate. His views were enlarged as well as humane. The power and glory of France would be extended by colonies. He had recently made an experiment in Brazil, which was defeated by the apostasy and mismanagement of his agent, Villegagnon, who, after undertaking the expedition, and partly executing it, changed

his religion, and abandoned his trust. Charlevoix, the Jesuit historian, says, "his eyes were at length opened," and he seems to rejoice that this attempt to foster a nest of heretics "ended in smoke."

Disappointed, but not discouraged, by this failure, Coligni renewed his endeavors to attain the same end, by planting a colony in another part of the world, far removed from civilized men, and, as he hoped, from the interference of foreign powers, and of hostile factions at home. He obtained a patent from the King, authorizing him to send an expedition to Florida, and conferring such powers as would enable him to carry his extensive plans into effect. As the first voyage was to be principally for discovery, two vessels suited to that object were fitted out, resembling in their construction the Spanish caravels. The command was given to JOHN RIBAUT, a native of Dieppe, an experienced mariner, and in other respects eminently qualified for so important a charge. He was of the Protestant religion, and was accompanied by several gentlemen, prompted by curiosity or a spirit of adventure, who, with the soldiers and sailors, are understood to have been of the same faith. He sailed from Havre de Grace on the 18th of February, 1562.

For five days the vessels were assailed by

winds so adverse and tempestuous, that he was constrained to put into the harbor of Brest, where he remained two days; and having set on shore some of the sick, he thence took his departure from the coast of France. At the outset, he showed a boldness and decision, which marked his character. He resolved to deviate from the track of preceding navigators. "Albeit," he says, "the wind was for a long season very much against us, and troublesome, yet at the end I determined with all diligence to prove a new course, which hath not yet been attempted, which, indeed, is the true and short course that hereafter must be kept, to the honor of our nation, rectifying the old conserved opinions, which too long time have been holden as true; which is, that it was thought a thing impossible to have the wind at east-north-east, and keep the race and course we enterprised, but that we should be driven toward the region of Africa, the Isles of Canaria, Madeira, and other lands thereabouts." And the cause why we have been the more provoked and assured to take this new race hath been, that it seemed to every one that we might not pass, or go in this navigation, without the sight and touching of the Antilles and Lucayas, and there sojourn and take fresh water and other necessities, as the Spaniards do in their voyages to New Spain,

whereof, thanked be God, we have had no need, nor entered the Channel of Roham ; which hath been thought impossible. Foreseeing, also, that it was not expedient for us to pass through the islands, as well to shun many inconveniences that might happen in passing that way, whereof springeth nothing but innumerable quarrels, pleadings, confusions, and breach of all worthy enterprises and godly navigations, whereof ensue complaints and odious questions between the subjects of the King and his friends and allies ; as also to the end they might understand, in the time to come, we would not have to do with their islands and other lands, which, for that they first discovered them, they keep with much jealousy.”

Having formed this resolution of pursuing a new track, he refrained from communicating it to those on board, lest it should excite uneasiness among them, or apprehensions of the hazards of exploring unknown seas. He further observes, “ So it is come to pass that God, by his only goodness, hath given us grace to make the furthest art and traverse of the seas, that ever was made in our memory and knowledge, in longitude from the east to the west ; and therefore was it commonly said, both in France and Spain, and also among us, that it was impossible for us safely to arrive thither, whither

the Lord did conduct us. All which persuaded but of ignorance and lack of attempting, which we have not been afraid to give adventure to prove.” \*

After a voyage of two months and three days from the time of leaving Brest, they saw land, on the last day of April, at the distance of seven or eight leagues. As they approached the shore, the country appeared low and level, and covered with dense forests. To a point, which jutted into the sea, they gave the name of Cape François, in the latitude of twenty-nine and a half degrees, probably a part of Anastasia Island, and south of the present site of St. Augustine. The weather being fine, they “sailed and viewed the coast all along with unspeakable pleasure of the odorous smell and beauty of the same, and did behold to and fro the goodly order of the woods wherewith God had decked every way the said land.”

At night they cast anchor near the mouth of a river, the entrance of the ships being obstructed by a bar of sand. At the dawn of day the

---

\* These extracts are taken from the extremely rare tract entitled, “The whole and true Discoverye of Terra Florida; written in French by Captaine Ribauld, the fyrst that whollye discovered the same; and nowe newly set forthe in Englishe, the 30th of May, 1563; prynted at London by Rouland Hall, for Thomas Hacket.”

next morning, two barges and a small boat, with Captain Ribault and several officers and soldiers on board, crossed the bar in order to explore the river, finding "a goodly and great river within," and six or seven fathoms of water. The natives were soon discovered coming down to the beach, showing no signs of fear or surprise, but, on the contrary, appearing friendly, and pointing out the best place for landing. This was on the north side of the river. The Captain went on shore with his party, and was received in the kindest manner by the Indians. One of them, to whom he presented a looking-glass, ran with it to the chief, who took off his girdle and sent it to Captain Ribault, as a token of assurance and friendship. The two parties then approached each other, the Indians following their chief, as Ribault says, "with great silence and modesty, yea, more than our own men did;" and the greeting, on the part of the natives, was marked with frankness and dignity, without the least reserve or apparent suspicion.

After a short interview, the Frenchmen retired a little way, and prostrated themselves to the earth, rendering thanks to the Almighty for their safe arrival, and imploring his further protection in a new and strange land. This act of devotion was viewed by the Indians in perfect

silence, as they sat motionless on the ground. As soon as it was closed, Ribault pointed with his finger towards the heavens, indicating that the object of their prayers was above. The chief then pointed with two fingers in the same direction, to show that he and his people worshipped the sun and moon, as was afterwards ascertained; and from the ceremony they had now witnessed, the natives supposed the Frenchmen to be worshippers of the sun.

The number of men, women, and children gradually increased, and they proceeded to erect bowers for their strange visitors, constructed of the green branches of the bay-tree, near those which they had prepared for themselves; and the chief seemed disposed to enter into relations of amity and alliance, as far as it could be done by signs. Captain Ribault was much struck with the manners and appearance of these simple tenants of the forest, who had never before seen a European. "They be of a goodly stature, mighty, fair, and as well shapen and proportioned of body as any people in the world; very gentle, courteous, and of a good nature. The fore part of their body and arms be painted with pretty devised works, of azure, red, and black, so well and so properly as the best painter of Europe could not amend it. The women have their bodies painted, too, with a certain herb like unto moss, whereof the cedar-

trees and all other trees be almost covered. The men for pleasure do always trim themselves therewith, after sundry fashions. They be of tawny color, hawk noses, and of a pleasant countenance.” \*

Having passed the first part of the day with these hospitable entertainers, and exchanged presents with them, receiving an abundant supply of fresh fish, which the natives caught in nets of reeds ingeniously contrived, the Captain crossed over with his boats to the south side of the river. He was here met by a company of men, who received him “very gently and with great humanity,” giving him delicious fruits recently plucked from the trees ; but they seemed more suspicious than their neighbors, for they had with them neither women nor children, and were mostly armed. “The king came thither with his brethren and others, with bows and arrows in their hands, using therewithall a goodly and grave

---

\* This custom of painting their bodies with “pretty devised works” appears to have been precisely the same, as that of *tattooing* in the South Sea Islands. The drawings made by Le Moyne on the spot, and engraved by De Bry, represent these figures with much clearness and beauty, and they bear a very close resemblance to the figures on the bodies of the natives of New Zealand, and other islands in the South Seas. They were executed in the same manner by the painful process of pricking the colors into the skin.



fashion, with their behavior right soldierlike, and as warlike boldness as may be." Their demeanor was gentle and friendly, however, and, after exchanging presents, they allowed the strangers to wander about at their pleasure.

And here the Captain and his companions were amazed at the novel scenes around them; the broad meadows, the majestic forests abounding in trees of all sorts, palm, cypress, cedar, and bay, "the highest and greatest, with also the fairest vines in all the world, with grapes according, which, without natural art and without man's help or trimming, will grow to the tops of oaks and other trees that be of wonderful greatness and height." Every thing they beheld, in short, trees, shrubs, plants, animals, excited wonder. They saw luxuriant mulberry-trees, with fruit both red and white, on the boughs of which were "silkworms in marvellous number, and a great deal fairer and better than be our silkworms."\* In the exuberance of his delight, the Captain exclaims in his narrative, "It is a thing unspeakable to consider the things that be seen there, and shall be found more and more in this incomparable land, which, never yet broken with plough-irons,

---

\* This fact is also mentioned by Laudonnière. Basanier's *Histoire Notable de la Floride*, p. 10. It is uncertain what kind of a caterpillar the travellers saw, but it could hardly have been the silkworm.

bringeth forth all things according to its first nature, wherewith the eternal God endowed it." The natives planted fields of maize, and divers kinds of seeds and vegetables in their gardens. "Their spades and mattocks be made of wood, so well and fitly as is possible, which they make with certain stones, oyster-shells, and muscles; wherewith also they make their bows and small lances, and cut and polish all sorts of wood that they employ about their buildings and necessary use." Their arrows were pointed with the teeth of fishes, and their bow-strings were made of the skins of animals.

At evening, the party descended the river to their ships, Captain Ribault naming it the River May, his exploring tour having been performed on the first day of that month. It is the same river that was afterwards called St. Matheo by the Spaniards, and is now known as the St. John's. Ribault speaks of it as in the thirtieth degree of latitude, which more accurate observations proved to be very nearly its true position.

The next day the boats were again manned betimes, and the Captain and principal officers and gentlemen embarked, with "a pillar or column of hard stone, with the King's arms engraved thereon, to plant and set the same at the entry of the port, in some high place, where it might be easily seen." Coming to land on the south side

of the river, they selected a suitable spot on a little hill, compassed around with cypress, bay, and palm-trees, and with sweet smelling shrubs, in the midst of which, with appropriate ceremonies, the monument was erected, and possession was taken of the country in the name of the King of France. This was done before any Indians appeared ; but they soon gathered around, viewed the stone for a time in silence, and then retired without touching it or speaking a word.

The day was passed between the parties nearly in the same manner as the preceding. The natives showed the same disposition to conciliate and befriend their visitors, supplying them with provisions in bountiful measure, pounded maize baked into little cakes, affording "good nourishment," beans, roots, vegetables, and "many kinds of good fishes," and also giving them painted deer-skins. The French were inquisitive concerning gold, silver, and pearls, of which they saw specimens adorning the persons of some of the natives. One man had a collar of gold and silver about his neck, from which was suspended a pearl "as great as an acorn at the least." These emblems of the reputed wealth of the New World wrought powerfully upon the imaginations of the adventurers, and led them to interpret the signs of the natives in a way most favorable to their sanguine wishes. They inferred that there were

mines of gold, silver, and copper in the land, and particularly among the mountains not very remote in the interior ; and that pearls were found along the margins of the sea and rivers in "so marvellous abundance as is scarce credible." These delusive dreams deceived not only themselves but those who followed in their track, till at length it was discovered, after many a disappointment, that all the gold and silver, of which these poor savages could boast, were gathered from the wrecks of Spanish vessels on the southern coasts of Florida.

On the 3d of May, the sails were again set, and Captain Ribault coasted along the shore northward as near as he could safely approach with his vessels. At the distance of seven leagues from the River May, according to his estimate, he saw an opening, into which he entered with a small boat, and discovered it to be the mouth of a river, which he called the Seine, because it resembled the river of that name in France. He entered the river with his boat, and ascended about three leagues from its mouth, where he fell in with a party of Indians ; but, he observes, "it seemed somewhat against their wills that we went thither, for, by their cries and noises, they made their wives, and children, and household stuffs to be carried into the woods." They offered no resist-

ance, however, but continued harmless and peaceful, and permitted the strangers to enter their houses, which were constructed with posts set upright and covered with reeds, "the most part of them after the manner of a pavilion." In one house, much larger than the others, they found a platform running round the sides for beds and seats, raised about two feet from the floor, and supported by pillars painted red, yellow, and blue, and brightly polished. The cautious natives gained confidence by the peaceable bearing of their unexpected visitors, and came back to their houses and gathered around them, and on their departure presented them with water, fruit, and deer-skins.

Captain Ribault was as much delighted with the aspect and fertility of the country here, as he had been at the River May. His descriptions are glowing, and he draws a lively picture of the rich resources which it afforded for future settlements. He seems, also, to have formed a tolerably correct idea of the nature of the coast, fringed with islands, and containing many estuaries and inland communications by water. He says, "It is a country full of havens, rivers, and islands, and it seemeth that men may sail without danger through all the country, and never enter into the great sea, which were a wonderful advantage." Still sail-

ing northward, he discovered seven other rivers, to some of which he likewise gave the names of rivers in France, as the Somme, Loire, Garonne, Gironde. It would be impossible, now, to ascertain the rivers to which he affixed these names.\* It is probable, indeed, that some of them were no more than inlets between islands; for he did not go ashore to explore them, and has left no descriptions of what he saw. He assigns as a reason the many inconveniences and dangerous accidents that are well known "to have happened unto men, not only in attempting new discoveries, but also in all places, by leaving their great vessels in the sea far from the land, unfurnished of the heads and best men." After sailing along the coast for about four weeks, he came to a river, in the mouth of which was deep water, good anchorage, and a spacious harbor, which he called Port Royal, a name which it retains to this day on the maps of South Carolina.

---

\* Laudonnière says the Seine was about four leagues from the River May, and the Somme nearly six leagues from the Seine. These distances would make the Seine correspond to the river now called Nassau, and the Somme to the St. Mary's.

## CHAPTER II.

*Ribault explores the Country around Port Royal. — Builds Fort Charles. — Leaves a small Colony under Captain Albert. — Returns to France. — Distresses in the Colony. — Kindness and Assistance of the Natives. — The Colonists build a small Brigantine, and sail for France.*

DURING this voyage, the two large vessels continued in the open sea, at some distance from the shore, to avoid the danger of hidden shoals, while the pinnaces, or ships' boats, sailed near the land, for purposes of discovery. By the men in these boats, the harbor of Port Royal was first seen, and they communicated so favorable an account of it to Captain Ribault, that he resolved to have soundings taken, and to bring the large ships into it, especially as they needed repairs, and were becoming short of water and fuel. The experiment answered his best hopes, and on the 27th of May he cast anchor in ten fathoms of water, embosomed in a bay three leagues broad from cape to cape, "one of the fairest and greatest havens of the world," although he cautions future navigators to be mindful of the shoals towards the south-east.

The ships being thus for the first time moored in a safe harbor, the Captain prepared to make such discoveries as his situation would allow. He immediately went on shore, attended by some of his officers and soldiers, and was smitten with the beauty of the country, the stately cedars and oaks, the rich herbage, and odoriferous shrubs. The woods were alive with wild turkeys, partridges "gray and red," and numerous birds of unknown plumage. He found that the bay opened itself into two arms, each of capacious breadth, one stretching to the north, and the other to the west, with land between them pointing towards the sea, which was afterwards ascertained to be an island.

He next sailed up the western arm, or river, with his pinnaces, and ascended about twelve leagues, when he turned into another arm leading towards the east. Indians were seen, both men and women, partly hidden in the woods, who at first were shy, and kept at a distance; but at length gaining confidence, they approached the bank of the river, and by signs invited the strangers to land. The greeting was friendly, and they gave the Captain presents of deer-skins, little palm-leaf baskets, and a few pearls. He rewarded them liberally, and, after a short visit, returned to his ships in the bay. This excursion was undoubtedly up what is now



known as Broad River, and around the northern part of Port Royal Island.

The ceremony of taking possession of the country was next performed. A stone column, with the King's arms engraved upon it, like the one set up at the River May, was put into one of the pinnaces, and Captain Ribault, with a small party, sailed again up the western river about three leagues, till he came to an island separated from the main land by a small stream, through which he passed. On this island was discovered a little hillock, commanding a fair and pleasant view, and here the monument was erected, bearing testimony that the country belonged to the King of France. The hillock was nearly surrounded by a small lake of fresh water. Not far off was another island, which they named the Isle of Cedars.

Ribault sailed again up the western river, with the view of inducing the Indians to come on board his ships, for the Queen had commanded him, if possible, to bring some of the natives home with him. Two Indians were prevailed upon by gentle means to enter one of the pinnaces, and were finally taken to the ships, but apparently uneasy and disappointed at not being set on shore. They were treated in the kindest manner, however, on board the ships, and every one strove to promote their contentment and

happiness by presents and good usage. The Captain decorated their persons with fine apparel, with which they were pleased, but still manifested a strong anxiety to be sent back. Laudonnière endeavored to win them by asking the names of things in their language, and conversing with them, as far as it could be done by signs. But all without avail; for, although they consoled themselves at times with their wild, monotonous songs, which were sung by both in perfect concord, yet their spirits drooped, they were unhappy, and seized the first opportunity to escape. In the night they silently entered a little boat belonging to the ship, and were floated by the tide to the shore; leaving behind the presents which they had received from the Captain, thereby showing an honorable sense of delicacy and justice.

Captain Ribault was too humane and politic a man to lament their departure. In writing to Coligni, he says, "Albeit I was willing, according to your commandment and memorial, to bring away some of them with us, on the Prince's behalf and yours, I forbore to do so, for many considerations and reasons that they told me, and for that we were in doubt, that, leaving some of our men there to inhabit, all the country, men, women, and children, would not have ceased to pursue them, to have theirs again;

seeing they be not able to consider to what intent we should have carried them away ; and this may be better done to their content when they have better acquaintance of us, and know that there is no such cruelty in us, as in other persons and nations, of whom they have been beguiled under color of good faith ; which doing in the end turned to the doers' no good."

The allusion here is to the Spaniards, who landed on this coast forty years before, under Vasquez de Aylon. He entered a large river, which was afterwards called Jordan by the Spaniards, and he was kindly and hospitably received by the natives. In return, having invited a great number of them to an entertainment on board his two ships, he treacherously took this opportunity, in the midst of the festivities, to hoist his sails and put to sea, carrying off one hundred and thirty Indians into hopeless captivity. One of the vessels foundered on its way to Hispaniola, and all on board perished. Many of the wretched natives in the other ship pined and died, obstinately refusing food. The few survivors were consigned to slavery in the mines. Five years afterwards, Vasquez revisited the coast with a royal commission to conquer the country, which he called Chicora. One of his ships was cast away and lost ; two hundred of his people, who went on shore, were destroyed by the natives ;

and Vasquez himself, disappointed and broken-hearted, sailed back to Hispaniola with the remnant of his fleet, heavily and justly punished for his bloodthirsty ambition and atrocious crime.\*

Having passed several days in examining the country, Ribault thought it the most tempting

---

\* Barcia's *Ensayo Chronologico*, pp. 4, 9. Writers disagree as to the part of the coast upon which Vasquez landed, and as to the river called *Jordan*. Ribault believed Port Royal to be the same river. He says, "This is the river of Jordan in mine opinion, whereof so much hath been spoken." Laudonnière thought differently, and supposed the Jordan to be further north. *Basanier*, p. 16. The place of landing was called Cape St. Helen's, which in Charlevoix's map is placed near the Santee, making that river the Jordan. This is evidently a mistake. St. Helen's Sound is more than half a degree south of the Santee, and about twenty miles north of Port Royal. The Jordan was doubtless one of the large rivers emptying into this sound. There are three such rivers, the Coosaw, the Combahee, and the Edisto. Of these the Coosaw is the largest, and is most likely to have been the Jordan. But the Coosaw is only an extension of the Broad River, or Ribault's western arm; the two uniting to encompass the Island of Port Royal, so that Ribault, in his expedition up the western arm, may have entered the waters of the Jordan. It is singular, however, that so recent an event as that of the treacherous conduct of Vasquez, his last voyage having been in 1525, should not have been remembered by the natives, and caused them to view their new visitors with strong suspicion, if not to have met them with open hostility. But it would not seem, from any thing that is written by Ribault or Laudonnière, that the natives had ever before seen or heard of Europeans.

place he had seen for establishing a colony. He accordingly called his people together, and made a formal address on the subject, setting forth the advantages of such a settlement, and the glory that would be achieved by extending the dominions of France, and then leaving it to their option to undertake the enterprise or not. There was no lack of volunteers. He writes to Coligni, "With such a good will and jolly courage did such a number offer themselves, that we had much to do to stay their importunity, and namely of our shipmasters and principal pilots, and such as we could not spare. Howbeit, we left there but to the number of thirty in all, gentlemen, soldiers, and mariners, and that at their own suit and prayer, and their own free wills, and by the advice and deliberation of the gentlemen sent on the behalf of the Prince and yours; and have left unto the forehead and rulers, following therein your good will, Captain Albert de la Pierria, a soldier of long experience, and the first from the beginning that did offer to tarry."

At the request of the volunteers, Ribault assisted them in building a fort, and supplied it with provisions and the necessary means of defence. In searching for a suitable place, he ascended the north-eastern arm, till he came to the mouth of a small river on the left, which entered into an island; and finding it deep enough for

vessels of moderate size, he sailed up it for some distance, till he discovered an open and convenient situation on its bank, where he laid the foundation of a fort. It was thirty-four yards long and twenty-six wide, with flanks proportioned to these dimensions. He sent to the ships for men, who brought pickaxes, shovels, and other instruments, and assisted, with much alacrity, in digging the trenches and constructing the fortification. This being done, Ribault assembled the men who were to remain, and after giving good counsel to Captain Albert and the soldiers, exhorting them to cultivate mutual harmony and good will among themselves, and bidding them an affectionate farewell, he returned to his ships, then at anchor in the bay. The fortification he called Fort Charles, in honor of the King, and to the little river on which it stood he gave the name of Chenonceau. The situation was undoubtedly on the eastern side of the island of Port Royal, and not far south of the present town of Beaufort.\*

---

\* Some authors have supposed that the name of the present state of Carolina was derived from that of the French fort at Port Royal. This is highly improbable. Ribault, Laudonnière, and the French authors who followed them, write the name *Charlesfort*. The fort afterwards built by Laudonnière, on the River May, in Florida, was called *Caroline*, or Carolina in the Latin translations. This

The next day, which was the 11th of June, the two ships sailed out of the harbor, at the same time firing a salute, which was answered at the fort. Ribault steered a northerly course, intending, as he says, to explore the coast as far north as the fortieth degree of latitude; "but, forasmuch as there came upon us troublesome and cloudy weather, very incommodious for our purpose, and considering also, amongst many other

---

name appears never to have been given to the fort at Port Royal. Can it be presumed, that in a charter granted to Sir Robert Heath by Charles the First, more than sixty years after the destruction of both these forts, the name of either of them, and a French name, should have been appropriated to the immense tract of country included in that charter? All probable testimony is against it, and no direct proof has been cited. Is it not more likely that the name *Carolana*, in Heath's charter, changed to *Carolina* in the subsequent charter to the Earl of Clarendon and his associates, was assigned and retained in honor of the two English kings who granted them? The French called the country *Florida*, sometimes *New France*, and gave the name of *Caroline* only to the fort on the River May. Charlevoix said, in 1744, "Those authors have been greatly deceived, who have persuaded themselves that this name was the origin of that of one of the most beautiful of the English provinces in America." *Hist. de Nouv. France*, Liv. I. In a tract, entitled "A Brief Description of Carolina," published in 1666, only three years after the second charter mentioned above was granted, the author says, "The province was so called in honor of his Sacred Majesty that now is, Charles the Second, whom God preserve!" Carroll's *Hist. Collections*, Vol. II. p. 10.

things, that we had spent our cables and furniture thereof, which is the most principal thing that longeth to them that go to discover countries, where continually both night and day they must lie at anchor; also our victuals being perished and spoiled; our lack of boatswains to set forth our row barges, and leave our vessels furnished; the declaration made unto us of our pilots, and some others that had before been at some of those places where we proposed to sail, and have been already found by some of the King's subjects; the danger also and inconveniences that might thereof happen unto us; and by reason of the great mists and fogs whereof the season was already come; we perceived very well where as we were, that we could do no good, and that it was too late, and the good and fit season to undertake this thing was already past."

These considerations induced Captain Ribault to abandon his ideas of further discovery, and turn his course towards France. Laudonnière adds, that before this resolution was taken, they kept near the coast about fifteen leagues, and discovered the mouth of a river, which was too shallow to be entered, and was surrounded by shoals far out to sea. It seemed to be the voice of the whole company, after the matter had been fully debated, that it was inexpedient to hazard any further attempts; some assigning the reasons



stated above, and others representing to the Captain, that he might well be satisfied with what he had accomplished, since he had effected more in six weeks, than the Spaniards had done in two years during their conquests of New Spain.\* Ribault immediately took his departure for France, and, after a prosperous voyage, the particulars of which have not been related, he arrived at Dieppe on the 20th of July, having been absent five months.

Let us now return to the little colony at Fort Charles. For a season, they were fully occupied in completing their fort. In the mean time, they were visited by the Indians, and obtained intelligence of a neighboring chief called Audusta, who proved a faithful friend, receiving Captain Albert courteously at his own habitation, and also recommending him to four other chiefs of his acquaintance, who bestowed upon him presents as tokens of amity and friendship. Audusta carried his civility so far as to invite the Frenchmen to a grand celebration, "the feast of Toya," which was performed with great pomp and ceremony, with dances, and songs, and grotesque exhibitions, which lasted for three days, and were closed by a sumptuous entertainment.

While the provisions held out, which had been left in the fort by Captain Ribault, the colonists

---

\* Basanier's *Histoire Notable*, p. 21.

seem to have enjoyed good cheer and contentment. But unfortunately, they lived from day to day without forethought. They expected supplies from France; but when these would arrive they could not foresee, and accidents might prevent their arriving for a long time, as was proved in the end. Yet they took no pains to cultivate the soil, or plant a single seed, or provide in any manner for their future wants. At length their provisions failed, and their only resource was in the bounty of their Indian neighbors, whose stock at this time was slender, as their surplus corn had been used for seed, and the harvest was not yet come. Their own food was chiefly mast and roots; but they generously divided such as they had with their friends.

In the midst of their distresses, the Frenchmen were told of two powerful chiefs far away at the south, Ouadé and his brother Couexis, who had abundance of corn, and whose liberality might be relied on. The pinnacle was fitted out, and they sailed along the coast about twenty-five leagues, in search of the country of Ouadé. At length it was found, and the reports of the friendly Audusta and his people turned out to be true. The wealthy chief received them kindly, showed them his house adorned with tapestry of richly colored feathers, white couches embroidered with fine workmanship and fringed with scarlet, and, what

was best of all, loaded the pinnace with corn and beans. With this precious cargo they joyfully retraced their voyage to Fort Charles.

But a new calamity speedily overtook them. The house in which they lodged, and in which their provisions were stored, took fire in the night, and burned to the ground, leaving them time to rescue a small portion only from the flames. The faithful Audusta, hearing of the disaster, came to their relief; but sympathy was all that he could bestow. Good will and a helping hand, however, were not wanting, and he encouraged his people to assist in collecting materials and erecting a new house. When this was done, their thoughts were again turned to their great benefactor at the south. The sails of the pinnace were set, and the voyage was made, according to Laudonnière's account, not in the open sea, but by an interior route through the streams or channels within the islands. They reached the habitation of the generous Ouadé, and told the dolorous story of the conflagration and their distresses. He received them as before, sent a messenger to his brother Couexis, and, by the contributions of both, the pinnace was a second time freighted with a burden of corn and beans.\*

---

\* From the imperfect account which we have of these transactions, it would seem that the territories of these generous chiefs bordered on the Savannah River.

Hitherto, the inmates of the fort had dwelt together in harmony, and shared in each other's privations with becoming fortitude and forbearance. Unemployed, however, and passing their days in listless indolence, without motive or object, while the Indians supplied them with food, it was not surprising that the seeds of dissension should spring up and shoot rankly in so fertile a soil; nor, judging from all experience in like cases, is it wonderful that the fruit of such folly should work the ruin of those, who had nourished the plant upon which it grows. Idleness is an enemy to obedience; and misfortune, in which all are equally involved, has a tendency to weaken the sense of respect for superiors.

Captain Albert had occasion to apply the rules of discipline in a manner, which gave offence to some of his men. He is charged with having hanged one of the soldiers, treating another with extreme cruelty, and using brutal language. A soldier was banished to an island nine miles off, and was deprived of food till he was nearly starved. Enraged by these acts of madness and violence, the men rose in a mutiny against him, and put him to death. It must be remembered, that this is their own story, as related afterwards by some of them to Laudonnière, to whose narrative, drawn from these sources, we are indebted for all that is known of what passed at Fort

Charles from the time it was left by Captain Ribault. After committing such an outrage themselves, it may be presumed that they would exaggerate the faults of the unfortunate victim of their revenge.

Being now without a head, they chose for their leader Nicholas Barré, who is represented as a man worthy of the command, and who, at all events, had the address to restore tranquillity and obedience.\* Their forlorn condition, however, bore heavily upon their spirits, especially as they saw famine staring them in the face, and they could not hope to subsist much longer upon the bounty or charity of the savages. From day to day they expected succors from France; but these had been so long delayed, that even the fountain of hope was almost dried up. In this extremity, they resolved to build a small vessel or brigantine, in which they could transport themselves across the unknown ocean to their native land. There were no skilful carpenters or builders among them; but necessity supplied the defects of science, and in due time the hull of their frail bark was completed. The pinnacle furnished them with many necessary materials. Tools and

---

\* Nicholas Barré wrote an account of Villegaignon's voyage to Brazil, published in 1553, which renders it probable that he had been in that expedition. Ternaux's *Bibliothèque*, p. 21.

implements were left in the fort by Captain Ribault, and also a forge and iron, with which they were enabled to construct the iron-work. The long moss, which hangs in such graceful festoons from the lofty trees in that luxuriant climate, served for calking the vessels; and pitch in abundance was procured from the pine-trees in the forests.

Cordage and sails were still to be obtained; and here their good friend Audusta, and his neighbor, Maccou, another Indian chief, came to their aid. Understanding what was wanted, and skilled in this work, the Indians retired into the woods, to the number of two hundred, and in a few days returned with cordage sufficient to complete the tackle of the brigantine. They were rewarded with a present of hatchets, cutting-hooks, and other articles of utility or fancy. The shirts and sheets were cut up and wrought into sails. Thus by persevering diligence, and a series of ingenious labors and devices, the little bark was finished and equipped for sea.

Putting on board the small store of provisions that remained to them, and taking advantage of the first fair wind, they departed from the Bay of Port Royal, and launched boldly out upon the ocean.\* The adventure was perilous in the

---

\* A soldier by the name of Rouffi was left behind with the Indians, whether at his own request, or by accident, is not mentioned. *Basanier*, p. 75.

extreme, hazarded without reflection or forethought. They had not provided for a long voyage, and, in the exhilaration of the moment, they seemed to think that if they were once upon the wide waters, they should have none but favoring gales, which would waft them quickly to the shores of France. They were doomed to experience a sad and fearful disappointment. Before they had advanced one third of the way across the Atlantic, they encountered calms and head winds, so that for three weeks they scarcely made any perceptible progress. During this time, their provisions were so much exhausted, that they were reduced to the shortest possible allowance; and then a tempest arose, and the angry waves shattered the fragile bark so much, that the water poured in freely through the opening seams. At length they were brought to the desperate necessity of subsisting on their shoes and leather jackets. Still they continued their course, gaining courage from the conviction that they were daily approaching the desired haven, till a mountainous wave broke in upon the deck, and turned the crazy brigantine upon her side, partly filling her with water. Despair now seized upon every breast, and the wretched mariners resigned themselves to their fate. Some had died of hunger, others were languishing on the verge of death, and the few that retained their strength were

overwhelmed with dismay. As the vessel recovered its natural position, however, and continued to float, and to obey the rudder and sails, they summoned new courage, and pressed onward. At last everything that could sustain life had been consumed; they were driven to the terrible extremity, so abhorrent to the feelings of humanity, of subsisting on the flesh of one of their number, to whose lot it had fallen, by mutual agreement, to yield himself a sacrifice to save the lives of the others.

Their sufferings were finally relieved by the joyful sight of land. Just at this time, they were boarded by men from a small English vessel, among whom was a Frenchman that had been on the voyage with Captain Ribault, and who recognized his former companions. He supplied them with food and drink, and could speak to them of their home and friends. After deliberation, the Englishmen concluded to set the more feeble on shore, and take the others to Queen Elizabeth, who was then meditating an expedition to Florida. It is uncertain where the first party was landed, but probably on the coast of France.



## CHAPTER III.

*Second Voyage to Florida. — Laudonnière. — Fort Caroline erected on the River May. — Expeditions up the River. — Eagerness to obtain Gold and Silver. — Intercourse with the Natives. — Indian Wars.*

WHEN Ribault returned to France, he found the country in a ferment, and a civil war raging between the Catholics and Huguenots with unrelenting violence. The King, the Court, and Coligni, were so much involved in these tumults, that Ribault petitioned in vain for the succors, which he had promised to send to the little band of volunteers, whom he had left at Port Royal. They were forgotten amidst the distractions, that overwhelmed the nation with domestic feuds and calamity.

But as soon as the war subsided, Coligni, true to his purpose and his pledges, presented their case to the King, and solicited in their behalf the royal protection and support, and the further prosecution of his plan of founding a colony in Florida. He obtained a favorable hearing, and the King provided three armed ships for the enterprise; the *Elizabeth of Honfleur*, of one hundred and twenty tons' burden, commanded

by Captain John Lucas ; the *Petit Briton*, of one hundred tons, Captain Vasseur the master ; and the *Falcon*, of sixty tons, navigated by Captain Marchant.\* The command of the whole was given to René de Laudonnière, who had accompanied Ribault on the preceding voyage, and who had gained distinction by long experience both in the military and naval service. No writer has assigned a reason why Ribault was not appointed to the command. Probably he was otherwise employed. The Admiral Cologni, says Le Moyne, “ eminent for his virtues and Christian piety, and desiring the faithful administration of the King’s affairs, admonished Laudonnière of his high duties, and of the importance of his discharging them with scrupulous fidelity ; urging him, at the same time, to be cautious in selecting his companions, to choose such only as feared God, and especially such as professed the same religion as himself.” † That he might gain this end with the more facility, he was furnished with a written instrument, confirmed by the sign manual of the King, authorizing him to engage men of any description, whom he should think suited to the expedition. The King further

---

\* Ternaux’s *Recueil de Pièces sur la Floride*, p. 234.

† Le Moyne’s *Brevis Narratio* ; De Bry, Pars II. p. 6.

made a grant of one hundred thousand crowns for his use.\*

No difficulty was found in filling up his company of adventurers. Officers, soldiers, mariners, artisans, flocked to the port from all parts of the kingdom, and offered their services ; so that the commander's chief task was that of selection. In the number were several, who had performed the voyage with Ribault. Besides the men requisite for navigation and defence, there were others skilled in the various arts.† To these were joined volunteers, young men of ancient and noble families, who went without pay and at their own charge, flushed with the love of adventure, or seduced by the hope of speedy wealth. Every class seems to have been represented, except that of agriculturists, the most needed and least regarded of all. Two skilful pilots of Dieppe, brothers, by the name of Vasseur, were embarked, one in each of the two larger vessels.

---

\* This is Le Moyne's statement ; but Charlevoix doubts its accuracy, and says, without citing any authority, that the amount was only fifty thousand. Laudonnière makes no mention of this grant.

† Le Moyne's expression is strong ; *viros in omnibus artibus egregiè versatos*. He was himself attached to the expedition, at the special request of Laudonnière, as a painter and draftsman, it being his business to delineate the coasts, harbors, and rivers, the habitations and utensils of the Indians, *et quidquid singulare in ea provincia esset*.

All things being in readiness to the satisfaction of the commander, he sailed from Havre de Grace on the 22d of April, 1564, a year and nine months after the return of Ribault. He took the old route by way of the Canary Islands and the West Indies, stopping for water at the Island of Dominica. Much time was lost by this circuit; but the voyage was prosperous, the vessels at no time being separated more than three leagues from each other, and they saw the coast of Florida at the end of two months. On the 22d of June, they discovered a river, which Laudonnière estimated to be thirty leagues south of the River May. With his Lieutenant, Ottigny, and his Ensign, Arlac, he went in a boat to examine the mouth of the river, where he found the water too shallow to admit his vessels, although it was deeper within the shoals. Indians appearing on the shore, he landed and remained with them till night, when he returned to the ships, pleased with their friendly demeanor, and understanding from them that they desired his company longer. This river he named the River of Dolphins, on account of the great quantities of fish of that name, which he saw sporting in its waters.\*

---

\* According to De Thou and Charlevoix, this river was discovered by Ribault in his first voyage: but Ribault himself makes no mention of such a river, and Laudonnière assures us that it was ten leagues south of Cape Francois,

The next morning, he sailed for the River May, where he arrived two days afterwards, and cast anchor on the same spot that had been occupied by the vessels of Captain Ribault. Going on land, they were met by a party of Indians, who seemed overjoyed to see them, and, in token of friendship, cried out, *Ami! Ami!* a French word which they had learned from their former visitors. They also recognized those whom they had before seen. Their chief, Satouriona, besought Captain Laudonnière to go with him to the pillar, which had been set up by Ribault; and when they came to the place, it was found to be surrounded with little baskets of corn, and crowned with garlands of bay leaves. The savages then kissed the stone

---

the southernmost point on the coast touched by Ribault. Basanier's *Histoire Notable*, p. 36. In Charlevoix's map, the River St. John is strangely called the River of Dolphins, whereas it is demonstrable that the St. John is the same as the River May. It is not easy to identify the River of Dolphins with any one that is known at the present day. When Laudonnière first speaks of it, he represents it as being thirty leagues from the River May, and says he was two days in sailing from one to the other; yet he afterwards confounds it with the St. Augustine, making the distance from the May only nine or ten leagues. Hakluyt endeavors to reconcile the two accounts, by supposing the distance by sea to be thirty leagues, and over land ten leagues; but in reality the distance is very nearly the same both by land and sea, since the coast varies but little from a straight line.

with much show of reverence, and desired the Frenchmen to do the same. Willing to encourage the simple natives in so harmless a ceremony, which might redound to their own advantage, they were not loath to comply. This interview continued for some time, to the mutual satisfaction of the parties, and with an interchange of presents. It is specially noted that Satouriona requested one of his sons to give his good friend, the French Captain, a wedge of silver, which request was cheerfully obeyed. The day being thus passed, the voyagers went back at night to their ships.

The visit was renewed the next day, and the Captain sailed three leagues up the river, followed by the Indians, till he espied a small eminence not far from the river's bank, which tempted him to land. Passing by fields of Indian corn, he ascended a hill, covered with cedar, palm, and bay trees, emitting delicious odors, with vines entwined around their stately trunks and branches, from which were suspended clusters of rich grapes. The view was one of the most beautiful in the world ; presenting a wide expanse of green meadows, islands, and streams interlacing one another, bounded in the distance by the blue waters of the illimitable ocean ; a place so enchanting, says the enraptured narrator, that it

would constrain the unhappy victims of a melancholic temperament to change their humor.

While the Captain was indulging in this romantic reverie, Ottigny and a few others strolled into the woods, where they met a chief clothed in so capacious a garment of skins, that his train was held up, as he walked, by four attendants. This personage approached, and made a long oration to the *Sieur d'Ottigny*, which was lost on the dull ears of the wondering strangers, who could gather from it only that he invited them to his habitation; and, as a pledge of his sincerity, he presented his flowing mantle to their leader. They followed their guide till he led them to a company of fifty Indians, and then to the houses in which they dwelt, where they were regaled with water from a living fountain, brought in a large earthen vessel, and served round in a smaller one of wood; and all this with such courtesy and deference, such an air of amiable affability, as would have thrown a charm over the most polished manners of civilized life. But what astonished them more than all the rest, was the appearance of two venerable old men, with hair very long and white as snow, who seemed to be the relics of a primeval age. One of these patriarchs, the son of the other, pointed to five generations of his descendants standing before him in regular gradation; yet the Frenchmen

doubtless had but a confused idea of the arithmetical notation of the natives, when they inferred from what was told them, that the younger patriarch was two hundred and fifty years old, and that in the course of nature he might live thirty or forty years longer. Charlevoix quaintly remarks, in repeating the story, that it was a small matter for a man of his age to look down upon five generations. Receiving a present of two young eagles, which the Indians had tamed, and two small baskets of fruit, they took their leave.

Near the mouth of the river, Laudonnière had another interview with Satouriona, and was very inquisitive to know where he obtained the wedge of silver that had been given to him the day before. Indeed, the Frenchmen were so eager in their inquiries after gold and silver, that it is no wonder the wily chief soon discovered their weak point. He said that these metals came from a country far up the river, called Timagoa, whose King was his enemy, and that he obtained them by fighting the subjects of that King; and when Laudonnière promised to join him in a war against this enemy, he expressed great delight, and assured him that they could together easily achieve a conquest, and thus procure as much gold and silver as his friends could desire. It will be seen, that



the Captain had occasion to regret this hasty promise, volunteered on his part, and taken in earnest by the Indian.

Having all gone on board the ships, as usual, at night, the Captain, very early the next morning, sailed up the coast about four leagues to the River Seine, and thence six leagues further to the Somme. These rivers had been discovered and named by Ribault, the former evidently being what is known at this day as the Nassau, and the latter as the St. Mary's. Casting anchor at the mouth of the Somme, he entered the river with some of his men in a boat, and landed at a place where the Indians came to meet him, and where the chief, a tall and well proportioned man, with his wife and five daughters, whose beauty and grace are much commended, sat with becoming gravity, and received his visitors in a most friendly manner. The same chief had entertained Ribault, and he now presented to the Captain his bow and arrows, the strongest pledge of amity and alliance; and he directed his wife to enhance the value of this gift, by adding to it a few silver balls. Little else occurred during this ceremonious visit, except a trial of arms, at the suggestion of the chief, between the bows and arquebuses; and he seemed amazed when the bullets pierced a target, upon which the arrows made but a slight

impression, and mused for some time how this might be, appearing somewhat uneasy at the result of the experiment. His composure was not so much disturbed, however, as to intrench upon his politeness, and he urged his guests to pass the night with him, which they declined, and went on board.

Without proceeding further, Captain Laudonnière called the principal men and chief officers of the several ships to a council. Their opinion was asked as to the best place to be selected for a permanent location. He described to them the nature of the country along the coast of Florida, at the south, as being marshy, barren, and unfit for a settlement; spoke of Port Royal and the northern coast as deficient in some essential requisites; and added, that it was more important for them to seek for a place where the necessities of life abounded, than for a commodious harbor. These things considered, he thought the River May afforded the best situation, since the country was fertile, and had supplied them with more corn than any other place, "besides the gold and silver that were found there." After mature deliberation, this opinion was unanimously adopted, and it was resolved to establish themselves at the River May, till they should receive further advices from France.

A shade of mystery hangs over this part of the narrative. We are told at the beginning, that the first object of the expedition was to carry succors to the unfortunate colonists, whom Ribault had left at Port Royal, and nothing is anywhere said to explain why this was not done; nor is any hint dropped from which it can be inferred, that a knowledge of their having departed from Port Royal had reached France before Laudonnière sailed. And yet we find him stopping short, within two days' sail of that port, and returning abruptly to the River May. Strange as it is, however, that he should leave this point in the dark, it can scarcely be doubted that he had heard of the fate of that colony before he left France. In his address at the council, mentioned above, as reported by himself, he says, "If we should pass further towards the north to go in search of Port Royal, this step would be neither very advantageous nor convenient, at least if we may rely on the report of those, who have dwelt there a long time."\* From this mode of expression it seems clear, that he must have been informed of the disastrous failure of the colony while he was yet in France; for he certainly could not have obtained any intelligence respect-

---

\* Basanier's *Histoire Notable*, p. 44.

ing it after he sailed ; and this will account for his making no effort to convey the relief proposed when the expedition was first set on foot.

The vessels were anchored again at the mouth of the River May, on the 29th of June, and the Captain immediately set himself to look out for a place to build a fort. He landed and examined the grounds, and finally selected a spot close upon the river's brink, on the south side, and separated from the hill, with which he had been so much charmed, by an enchanting valley, covered with rich meadows of verdant grass and tall trees, interspersed with running brooks of fresh water. At the request of the soldiers, as he modestly informs us, he called it the *Vale of Laudonnière*. He encamped for the night on the place which he had chosen for the fort ; and early in the morning, he observes, at the sound of the trumpet all the company assembled, "that we might render thanks to God for our safe and happy arrival. We sang hymns of praise, beseeching him, that by his grace he would continue his accustomed goodness to us, his poor servants, and aid us in all our enterprises, that they might redound to his glory, and to the advancement of our faith."

After this act of pious gratitude and devotion, not unlike those of their brethren in faith, the Puritans of New England, on similar

occasions, they applied themselves with a resolute courage and renewed zeal to the construction of their fort, felling the trees, clearing away the bushes, hewing timbers, and throwing up intrenchments. The fort was of a triangular form, on two sides of which were a trench and walls of earth, with retreating angles, and platforms for admitting four cannon. The other side consisted of heavy timbers locked together. In erecting the buildings and storehouses within, Satouriona, on whose land the fort was built, rendered them good service. The roofs were of palm leaves interwoven after the fashion of the country; and the Indians, ingenious and skilful in this work, gathered the leaves and covered the frames according to their own method. A few toys and trinkets, and in some cases the more substantial gift of a hatchet, were accounted by them an ample reward. To guard against fire, which would kindle quickly in the dry palm leaves, the oven was placed at some distance in the woods. The fort was called Caroline, in honor of King Charles.\*

---

\* Two drawings of this fort, exhibiting different views, were made by Le Moyne, and engraved by De Bry. See plates IX and X in the *Brevis Narratio*. Laudonnière says the fort was two leagues from the mouth of the river. *Basanier*, p. 69. Challeux likewise makes the distance two leagues, (*Discours de l'Histoire de la Floride*, p. 33;)

This work being in such forwardness as to receive the munitions and provisions from the ships, Laudonnière planned an expedition up the river in order to search out the country of Timagoa. The Sieur d'Ottigny, who is represented as "a man worthy of all honor, for his address and virtues," was despatched with a small party and two Indian guides in boats, and directed to explore the river, make discoveries, and, if possible, to find the people whose riches in gold and silver had been so much extolled by Satouriona. After sailing about twenty leagues, they saw three canoes containing natives, and the Indian guides began to cry out "Timagoa! Timagoa!" and broke into such a clamorous rage at the sight of their enemies, that the Indians in the canoes took fright, rowed hastily to the shore, and fled into the woods. It was not the policy of Ottigny, however, to make enemies, and he caused the boat containing the guides to remain in the river, while he went with the other to the canoes, and put into them certain

---

and so does the author of the second voyage of Captain Hawkins, who visited the fort. *Hakluyt*, Vol. III. p. 517. It should be remembered, however, that when distances are mentioned, they are not presumed to be exact, since they were seldom, if ever, taken from actual measurement; yet in short distances the chance of error would be proportionably small.

ornaments and trifles, which he knew would please the Indians, and then retired. Meantime the cautious Timagoans kept watch in the woods, and when they saw what had been done, they ventured back to the canoes, and regarding this act of the captain as a token of peace, they gathered courage and beckoned him to land.

All suspicions being now laid aside, the Indians, received and treated their visitors as friends. The first and the only inquiry of the captain was, whether they had any gold or silver among them. The question was put by signs, doubtless by showing them specimens of these metals. The answer was, that they had none with them, but they could conduct one of his men to a place where gold and silver might be obtained. A resolute soldier immediately offered his services, and embarked with the Indians in their canoes, to go further up the river. As this man did not return the next morning, the captain followed him, and, after sailing about ten leagues, overtook the canoes. The soldier said, that he had found very little gold, and that the Indians would take him three days' journey further, where a powerful chief lived, who possessed it in abundance, and would exchange it for a small quantity of merchandise. At the soldier's request, he was left to make

this voyage, and Ottigny returned with the boats to Fort Caroline.

Fifteen days afterwards, a party went up the river again under Captain Vasseur, for the purpose of making discoveries, and ascertaining what intelligence the soldier could give. They found him at the residence of a chief called Malloua, where he was well entertained, and had gained, in his traffic, five or six pounds' weight of silver. This Malloua made a feast for his guests, and seasoned the repast with prodigious stories about the great King Outina, whose vassal he was, and whose dominions encompassed the territories of more than forty subordinate chiefs. He also told them of Outina's enemies, among whom were many powerful chiefs, and especially one Potanou, who had the strange fancy not to kill his prisoners, according to the universal custom of the Indians, but to burn a mark upon the left arm, and send them back to their own country. Others lived near high mountains, where there was a vast quantity of a kind of stone, with which they pointed their arrows.

Discovering probably what would best please his guests, he recited to them marvellous tales of the large plates of gold and silver with which Outina's allies covered their breasts, arms, legs, and other parts of their persons, when they went



to war, and which were proof against arrows shot from the strongest bow. His enemies also possessed these metals in the greatest profusion; and when Captain Vasseur intimated, that his commander would one day join the renowned Outina in conquering these enemies, Malloua expressed great delight, and said the least of the chiefs, whom he had mentioned, would reward such assistance by a heap of gold and silver two feet in height. The imagination of the Frenchmen was so much inflamed by these recitals, that they made no delay in hastening back to tell the joyful news to their companions at the fort.

So much progress had been now made in the fortification, that it was thought to afford a secure defence, and the ships departed for France on the 28th of July, leaving the colonists with supplies for nine months.\* Officers, volunteers, and soldiers, seemed now to be filled with joy at the golden prospects that opened before them, not doubting that they should soon realize in Florida the brilliant successes of the Spaniards at the south. Every man was personally interested in the result, since all were

---

\* This fact is stated by Laudonnière in general terms, implying that all the vessels sailed; but, as he afterwards speaks of the *Breton*, this vessel may have remained.

to share in the profits; and indeed it would appear, that, to a certain extent, they were co-partners. In one respect this was an advantage, because it made them more ardent in the enterprise; but at the same time it gave them liberty to cavil, complain, and protest, when events turned counter to their hopes and wishes. The soldiers were likewise allowed to hold small traffic with the natives on their own account.\*

About two months after the French landed,

---

\* Le Moyne says that Laudonnière early found it necessary to require, by a heavy penalty, that all traffic for gold, silver, and precious stones, should be on account of the common stock. *Brevis Narratio*, p. 7.

The expectation of the colonists, when the vessels sailed, may be learned from a letter written at the time by a soldier to his father in France. After telling him of the news, which they had heard, of a mine of gold and silver not more than sixty leagues from the fort, he adds, "If it shall please God to permit us to live here two years longer, we hope, with the aid we shall derive from the King, to take possession of the said mine. Within that time I hope to understand the ways of the savages, who are very good people, extremely easy in their traffic, and showing by signs that they will give pieces of gold and silver equal in size to the hatchets, cutting-hooks, knives, and collars of little value, which we will give in return." Ternaux's *Recueil*, p. 244. This was probably true at the first moment; but unfortunately the natives had little of these metals to give, and the avidity of the French soon taught them to understand their real value.

Satouriona sent a messenger to Laudonnière, asking whether he was ready to fulfil his promise, in joining him to make war upon his enemies. This was an embarrassing question; for it was the height of folly, at that time, to excite the hostility of the tribes in the interior; and, on the other hand, it was not convenient to have the enmity of his nearest neighbors. In short, he did not hesitate to refuse, and leave it in the power of Satouriona to say that he had violated his promise. There is nothing more remarkable in the character of a savage, than the remembrance of an injury or a favor, and Satouriona ever afterwards regarded him with jealousy, though he could not rely sufficiently on his strength to come to an actual rupture.

The chief was the more dissatisfied, as he had been for some time collecting his forces and supplies, with the expectation of this alliance. Not to be wholly disappointed, however, he proceeded to the country of Timagoa, made a furious onset upon his enemies, and came off in part victorious, bringing home thirteen prisoners. And here the French commander resorted to an expedient, which cannot be commended for its justice, whatever may be thought of its policy. He bethought himself that a good opportunity was now afforded to gain upon the good will of the Timagoans, and their great

King Outina, by sending back these prisoners to their friends. The first step was to gain possession of them. He sent a soldier to Satouriona, with a request that he would let him have two of the prisoners, which the indignant warrior promptly declined, saying that the French Captain had broken his promise, and violated the pledge he had given on his arrival. Whereupon Laudonnière took twenty soldiers, marched to the house of Satouriona, and entered it without ceremony. Astonished, but not intimidated, at this bold and rude salutation, the chief stood a long time without uttering a word, till Laudonnière demanded where the prisoners were. In no haste to reply, but still preserving an imperturbable countenance, he at last said, in a firm tone, that they had run away into the woods, frightened at seeing him come in such a warlike manner. His son went out to look for them, and in about an hour brought them back, and the Captain abruptly departed, and led them away to the fort.

Laudonnière says that this adventure gave great offence to Satouriona, as well it might, although he was so well skilled in the art of dissembling, that he afterwards sent to the fort a present of two baskets of pumpkins, determined to keep up a show of friendship, till an opportunity should offer to seek revenge. The pretence for

this rash act was, that it would afford an occasion to make a lasting peace between the hostile parties; but the real object was to win the favor of Outina, and open the way through his dominions to the imaginary mine among the mountains. Vasseur and Arlac were sent off with the prisoners. They found Outina, who feasted them to their hearts' content. Being just then engaged in a war with Potanou, he prevailed on Arlac to join him with a party of his soldiers, while Vasseur returned to the fort. A hot engagement ensued, in which the French arquebuses did good execution, and many of the poor Indians were slain by civilized Christians, to whom they had never done or imagined wrong. One French soldier was killed. Outina was overjoyed at the issue of this exploit, and, as a token of his gratitude, sent to the French Captain a profusion of thanks, painted skins, and a little silver and gold, with a promise that he would furnish him with men whenever he should need them for any enterprise of importance.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Discontent and Mutiny in Fort Caroline. — A Party of Sailors and Soldiers seize two Barks, and sail to the West Indies on a piratical Expedition. — Colonists distressed for the Want of Provisions. — Laudonnière resolves to return with his whole Company to France. — Difficulties with the Indians. — Sir John Hawkins. — Arrival of Ribault.*

IN these transactions the minds of the colonists found aliment sufficiently exciting to keep their hopes awake for some time; but before many weeks the camp was infested with the common malady among the idle and disappointed. No approaches had yet been made towards the mine, in which all imagined their wealth to be centred. A man by the name of Roquette pretended to a knowledge of magic, and convinced some of the soldiers that he knew the identical spot where the mine was, and what it contained, and assured them that each man would receive for his share ten thousand crowns. Hence grew up a mutiny, for they were clamorous to be led to this fountain of their treasures. One Genre, in whom Laudonnière had reposed special confidence, was among the leaders, and went to him as a delegate

from the rest, to prevail on him to march away directly to the mine.

It was in vain that he represented to them the rashness and absurdity of this proposal, their duty to the King, and the necessity of securing their own protection in the fort till they should receive further succors, instead of wandering away and exposing themselves to be cut off in detail by numerous tribes of savages. Unable to carry their point, they seemed to yield; but they secretly plotted against the life of the commander, going armed while they worked on the fort, intending to seek an occasion to kill him; and, when he fell sick, endeavoring to suborn the apothecary to give him poison; and last of all, forming a scheme to conceal a barrel of gunpowder under his bed, and set fire to a train. All these plots were detected, or failed from some other cause, and the mutiny subsided for a little time.

On the 4th of September arrived in the river Captain Bourdet from France. Whether his vessel was despatched by the government, or whether the voyage was on private account, is not related; probably the latter. But he remained more than two months with the colony. On his departure he took with him six or seven of the mutinous soldiers, leaving in their place some of his seamen.

About the same time, La Roche Ferrière and

another man were sent into the country to make discoveries, and were absent five or six months, during which they travelled among various Indian tribes, and brought back favorable accounts of the manner in which they were entertained.

The spirit of sedition had been checked, but not subdued. As soon as Captain Bourdet was gone, some of the mariners left by him put it into the heads of thirteen others, that with such barks as belonged to Laudonnière they might cruise among the West India Islands, and gain much booty. They accordingly stole one of the barks, and put to sea, having secretly supplied themselves with a stock of provisions. It was ascertained some time afterwards, that they took a small Spanish vessel, in which they found a quantity of gold and silver; and at length, their provisions falling short, they went to Havana. Making good the old proverb, that misfortunes seldom come single-handed, two Flemish carpenters stole the other bark, and went off with it, having cut the cable of the only small boat that remained, so that it floated out to sea.

Not a single bark or boat was now left, by which the river could be navigated. There were carpenters, sawyers, and smiths, however, and materials enough for constructing new ones; and Laudonnière ordered small boats to be built, and laid the keels of two large barks thirty-six feet in



length. For some time, this work went forward with the cheerful coöperation of all hands; but mischief was nevertheless lurking in the hearts of certain disaffected persons, who, by their seditious practices, soon drew others into their toils. Three of the leaders openly avowed their determination not to remain pent up in a fort, working as day laborers, instead of going in search of the treasures for which they had come to the New World; and since the Captain would not lead them into the country, they suggested the scheme of arming the two barks, and seeking their fortunes on the Spanish Main and among the islands, or, in other words, of turning pirates. They set forth the prospects of success in such glowing colors, that they brought over sixty-six soldiers, some of whom had hitherto been the most faithful of the whole company.

Having matured their plan, they sent a deputation to the Captain, requesting to be employed on this voyage, under pretence of obtaining provisions, which, they said, would soon fail in the fort. Laudonnière replied, that there was a full supply of provisions for four months, and within that time they might expect vessels from France, so that there was no occasion for anxiety on this score; and moreover, as soon as the barks were finished, he intended to go up the river and purchase corn of the native chiefs. Silenced, but

not satisfied, with this answer, they waited a few days, till Laudonnière fell sick and was confined to his room, when they surrounded his house in a body completely armed, and demanded of him the barks and a passport signed by his own hand. As he refused to comply with this demand, and boldly reprimanded them for their insolent conduct, they seized him and carried him prisoner to a ship then at anchor in the river.\* Leaving him there, they sent a passport for him to sign, declaring that his life would be the forfeit if he refused his signature. Under this constraint, there was no remedy but to accede to their demand.

Meantime all things being under their control, they seized upon whatsoever they wanted; and when the barks were finished, they put on board the King's munitions, powder, balls, and artillery, equipped them for sea, and forced Trenchant, a skilful pilot, and other mariners, to go with them against their will. They set sail on the 8th of December. As they disagreed among themselves at their departure, the two barks separated, and did not meet again for six weeks. This is not the place to narrate their adventures. They acted in all points as pirates, took a Spanish brigantine,

---

\* How this vessel came there, or what vessel it was, we are not told. It may have been the *Breton*, which, as stated above, there is reason to suppose did not return to France with the other two.

which they substituted for their barks, and then a caravel, which they exchanged for their brigantine ; landed in a predatory manner at a small port in Jamaica, and entered another, where they were handled so roughly by several Spanish ships, that they escaped with difficulty. After sailing around the Island of Cuba, and coming in sight of Havana, the pilot, Trenchant, and a few others, who had been led away by force, contrived to bring the vessel into the Bahama channel, and thus upon the coast of Florida. Their provisions being now exhausted, they concluded to return to the River May, and take the risk of the reception they should meet from the commander. They had been absent three months and a half.

When the vessel was seen approaching the coast, it was hailed as one of those expected from France. As soon as its true character was known, however, Laudonnière despatched Captain Vasseur with a company of soldiers, and directed that the vessel should be anchored in the river near the fort ; and this order was obeyed. Meantime, a council of officers decided that four of the leaders, by whom the others had originally been seduced, should suffer death. They were brought on shore before the others had landed ; and after the commander had made to them a solemn address, in the presence of his soldiers, representing the heinousness of their

crimes, he pronounced the sentence, which was immediately put in execution. At the solicitation of the soldiers, they were not hanged, but shot, and their bodies were then suspended upon gibbets near the mouth of the river.

When the mutineers sailed, they left Laudonnière in prison on board the ship; but he was immediately released by the Sieur d'Ottigny and his men, and restored to his command in the fort. From that time, every one rendered him entire obedience, and indeed there seems to have been no other cause of dissatisfaction with any, than the passion of avarice and a restless spirit of discontent. Two other boats were speedily built, suitable for navigating the river, and one of them sufficiently large to sail along the coast. While these were in progress, two Spaniards came to him from the interior, dressed in the fashion of the natives, and hardly to be distinguished from them. Fifteen years before, they had been wrecked on the southern coast of Florida, and had lived with the Indians ever since. Laudonnière was enabled to gain from them much useful information concerning the country and various Indian tribes.

Some time in February, 1565, one of the barks was fitted for sea, and Captain Vasseur was despatched with it to pay a visit to Audusta, the friendly and generous chief at Port Royal. He

took presents of apparel, hatchets, knives, and other articles valued by the Indians, and was also accompanied by a soldier called Aimon, who had been in the first voyage with Ribault, and whom it was supposed Audusta would remember. He was also instructed to look for Rouffi, who had been left there by Captain Barré when the French colony departed from Port Royal.\* The friendship and liberality of Audusta were found to be the same as formerly. He loaded the bark with corn and beans, and added, as a present to the commander of Fort Caroline, two stags, painted skins, and pearls, and promised as much territory as he could desire, if he would establish himself in that quarter.

The two barks were next sent up the river twelve leagues to a certain Queen, the widow of an Indian chief, renowned for her beauty, and so much honored by her subjects, that they would not suffer her to go on foot, but carried her about in a

---

\* Laudonnière calls the name of the captain, Nicolas Masson. *Basanier*, p. 75. But Hakluyt says that this was another name for Nicolas Barré, the captain who succeeded the unfortunate Albert de la Pierra. *Voyages*, Vol. III. p. 339. This is another proof, that the fate of the colony at Port Royal was known to Laudonnière when he left France. He informs us that Rouffi had been taken off by a Spanish vessel, before Vasseur's arrival, and carried to Havana.

kind of royal state on their shoulders. The visitors had no less reason to commend her bounty than her personal charms, for she gave them a good store of corn and acorns, and a few days afterwards sent an ambassador with a complimentary message to the commander.

Believing himself to be sufficiently supplied with provisions till the ships should arrive from France, and desiring above all things to keep his men from idleness, Laudonnière employed them in making new discoveries, and in enterprises of war with the great chief Outina. A party ascended the river to a great lake, so broad that land could not be seen on the opposite side, when, not venturing to go further, they returned to the Island of Edelano, which is described as extremely beautiful, fertile, and thickly inhabited.\* At some distance below, they made a visit to

---

\* This lake must have been the same that is now known as Lake George, one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth of the St. John's River. It is fifteen miles long and eight broad. It can be entered by vessels drawing eight feet of water. Williams's *Florida*, 2d ed pp. 54, 57. The Island of Edelano corresponds to Fleming's Island of the present day, contiguous to the mouth of Black Creek, which enters the St. John on the west side. Laudonnière represents it as about three leagues in length, and Williams states it to be twelve miles. He says also, that "the land is excellent, and highly cultivated in sea island cotton, provisions, and cane." *Ibid.* p. 44.

Outina, at whose earnest entreaty six men remained with him, among whom was a gentleman named Grotauld. The rest of the party returned to Fort Caroline. The chief of Edelano committed a treacherous act upon Peter Gambye, a French soldier, who had remained long in the country, and by his traffic had collected a considerable quantity of gold and silver, and other articles of value. The chief granted him a canoe and two men to conduct him down the river, but secretly ordered the men to murder him and seize his property, which they executed by cleaving his head in twain with a hatchet, while he was stooping to kindle a fire in the canoe.

Grotauld returned in about two months, and gave a most flattering account of the country through which he had passed, and drew a vivid picture of the prowess of a distant chief called Hostaquá, who was so mighty that he could bring three or four thousand warriors into the field, and desired nothing so much as a league with the French to subdue his enemies, thereby opening the way to the mountains of Apalache, where the mine which had excited such brilliant hopes was supposed to be situate. This proposal was not accepted, because it was thought more important to preserve the alliance of Outina, and afford him such assistance as could be spared. Nearly at the same time, this chief solicited a party of

soldiers to join him in a new war upon his inveterate enemy Potanou. The request was granted, and the Sieur d'Ottigny led thirty men to his camp, and performed the campaign, in which a bloody battle was fought, and after a sharp conflict of three hours, Potanou's forces were put to flight, being unable to withstand the unerring execution of the French arquebuses. Ottigny was not well pleased with the conduct of his allies, who showed less spirit than he expected, and always contrived to place the French in the front ranks and posts of danger; but he parted on good terms with the chief.

Before many weeks, however, the colonists were compelled to seek other employment. The end of April was the latest date they assigned for the arrival of the ships from France, and, relying on succors by those ships, they had thought it unnecessary to lay in provisions for a longer time. This happened to be the season of the year when the Indians were most scantily supplied. Their remaining stock of corn was planted, and, while it was coming to maturity, they roamed in the woods and procured a subsistence chiefly by hunting and fishing. The colonists, like their predecessors at Port Royal, had paid no attention to agriculture, not even cultivating a garden, although surrounded by a soil of surpassing fertility. The month of May approached, and



no vessel appeared; provisions failed; for six weeks they were reduced almost to the verge of famine.

In the midst of these calamities, despairing of relief from home, the whole company resolved, by a unanimous voice, that the only resource left to them was to fit up their vessels in the best manner they could, and return to France. It was first proposed to prepare the *Breton*, and to put two decks upon the Spanish brigantine, which the mutinous soldiers had brought from the West Indies. This plan was changed, however, and it was decided to build a new ship, instead of altering the brigantine. The shipwright encouraged them with the hope, that it could be finished by the 8th of August. Having now an object in view, all the mechanics and other laborers applied themselves to this work, although enfeebled by the want of food.

Meantime Laudonnière took a party of men, and went up the river with the barges in search of corn, subsisting by the way on berries and roots. He was obliged to return in a few days without success. The soldiers then became clamorous, and urged him to go among the Indians, as the resort of necessity, and seize their provisions by force. This step he prudently declined, as tending to exasperate the savages, and endanger the lives of the colonists. He promised to use every effort in his power to induce the Indians

to bring in corn, fish, and whatever else they could furnish, in exchange for merchandise. These endeavors were attended with some good effects for a little time; but the Indians soon discovered to what extreme necessity the colonists were reduced, and then they rose in their demands, till at last the soldiers, who gave the shirts from their backs for fish or anything that would sustain life, were treated by them with contempt and mockery.

An appeal was made to the generosity of Outina, whose friendship so much pains had been taken to conciliate. He sent a very small quantity of corn, but said he could obtain an abundant supply, if the French commander would furnish a party of soldiers to aid him in making war upon one of his enemies, a neighboring chief. Captain Vasseur set off upon this enterprise, but came back disgusted and indignant at the deceitful conduct of Outina, who led him against a different enemy, with no other design than revenge and conquest.

The soldiers in the fort, suffering from famine, and exasperated at the treatment they received from the savages, insisted that terms should no longer be kept with them, and that they ought to be punished for their duplicity and treachery. Constrained in some degree by their clamors, Laudonnière determined to take Outina prison-

er, both as an act of just retaliation, and as affording a prospect of obtaining corn from his subjects for his redemption. This scheme was executed by Laudonnière himself, who entered Outina's village with fifty men, and took him away amidst the cries and lamentations of his friends, assuring them that the prisoner would not be harmed, but would be restored whenever they should send him corn and beans, for which he would also give merchandise in exchange, and that he would remain in his boats two days waiting for them to comply with this condition. Promises were made, but not fulfilled, and Outina was taken down the river to Fort Caroline.

A little relief began to be afforded by the green corn, of which a small quantity was procured. Those who ate it, however, unaccustomed to this kind of diet, and eating too freely, fell sick. Two carpenters, strolling through a field of corn near the fort, could not refrain from gathering some of the ears to satisfy the cravings of hunger. They were seen by the Indians, and murdered.

After some time, Outina, who had been treated with marked kindness, prevailed on Laudonnière to set him at liberty, saying that, now the harvest was near at hand, his people would give an ample reward of corn and beans. According to this proposal, as the thing he most desired,

the Captain manned the two barks, and taking Outina with him, sailed up the river to a point six leagues distant from his village. The people, and especially his relations, delighted to see their chief, assembled on the shore, and brought a small quantity of bread, beans, and fish, which they gave to the soldiers. No arrangement could be effected, however, for redeeming the captive, and he was conveyed back to the fort.

A few days afterwards, Outina again implored the Captain to take him home, expressing the conviction that his wishes would then be complied with. When they came to the same part of the river, Outina's relations said that if he was set at liberty, the people would bring in the quantity of corn desired. They moreover promised that the corn should be conveyed to the boats, and left two hostages as a pledge that this agreement should be fulfilled. Laudonnière then released Outina, and despatched Ottigny and Arlac, with all the soldiers that could be spared, to accompany him to his dwelling. When they arrived, they found all the appearances suspicious. The corn was collected in three or four days; but no preparation was made for transporting it to the river, and every thing around them began to assume the aspect of war. Ottigny then ordered every soldier to take a sack of corn, and commenced his march

towards the river. As he entered a narrow way, he discovered a large body of Indians lying in ambush, and was soon assailed by a shower of arrows. A succession of skirmishes ensued, continuing, with short intervals, from nine o'clock in the morning till night, when they reached the boats. Two of the French soldiers were killed, and twenty-two wounded; and the loss would have been much greater, if they had not bethought themselves to pick up and break the arrows during the march, so that the Indians could discharge them but once. All the corn was left on the road, except the burden of two men, which was divided among the soldiers.

The despondency caused at the fort by the unfortunate issue of this adventure, and the certainty that no further supplies could be obtained from the natives along the borders of the river, was cheered for a moment by better success in another quarter. One of the barges made a trip to the River Somme, where the native chief honored his former professions of friendship by freighting it liberally with corn, in exchange for hatchets, knives, and trinkets.

All these resources were far below the wants of the colonists, who were still borne down by the extreme pressure of hunger; and, as an aggravation of their miseries, the shipwright told them, that, in consequence of the loss of the

two carpenters recently murdered by the Indians, and other unforeseen obstacles, he could not finish the ship by the time he had mentioned. By this intelligence the soldiers were driven to such a rage of despair, that it required all the address and authority of the commander to restrain them from a mutiny. He soothed them as well as he could, abandoned the idea of building a new ship, and resolved to repair the brigantine with as much despatch as possible. A few of the Indians in the vicinity, enemies to Outina, were retained in amity by such presents as could be given to them. Every hand was now busy with the preparations for departure.

This last resolution had scarcely been formed, when, on the 3d of August, four vessels were descried on the coast sailing towards the mouth of the river. The intelligence threw the whole company at Fort Caroline into an ecstasy of joy, every one believing the ships to be those, which had been so long expected from their native country. The commander was cautious, however, and prepared to receive them as enemies, in case they should prove to be such; putting his men under arms, and sending Captain Vasseur with a boat to take a nearer view of the vessels. He soon returned with the news, that they were an English fleet, commanded by

Captain John Hawkins, who manifested the most friendly disposition, and had come upon the coast only to obtain a supply of fresh water. Hawkins was now on his way to England from his second voyage to Africa and the West Indies, where his traffic in slaves and various commodities had been extremely successful. He had with him a Frenchman, by the name of Martin Atinas, who had been with Ribault in his first voyage, and was thus acquainted with this part of the coast. Atinas returned in the boat with Vasseur, bearing a generous present of bread and wine from Captain Hawkins to the French commander, and a request for permission to send his barges to some convenient watering-place in the river. This request was readily granted.

The next day, Captain Hawkins, accompanied by some of his officers unarmed, paid a visit to Laudonnière, at the same time distributing a bountiful portion of bread and wine among the starving soldiers. The interview was courteous and friendly on both sides, and the French commander bestowed upon his guests such cheer as his straitened circumstances would permit. When Captain Hawkins understood the condition of the colonists, and their desire to leave the country, he offered to take them all home, and promised to land them in France before

he should touch at an English port. Laudonnière felt obliged to decline this generous offer, as he did not know the relations then existing between France and England, and by such a step he might afford some grounds for the pretensions of the English to claims on Florida, and thus incur the censure of his King.

Hawkins went on board in the evening, and, after having seen the vessels which the French were fitting up, he told the officers who came to his ship, that they could not undertake the voyage in these vessels without extreme jeopardy, and again offered to transport a part of the company, and to leave one of his own ships for the remainder. This proposal was noised abroad among the soldiers, who declared, that, if the commander would not accept it, they would apply to Captain Hawkins in a body, and implore him to take them away at all events.

This resolution they communicated to Laudonnière, who called a council of officers to consider the subject, and it was finally determined to purchase one of Captain Hawkins's vessels, if his consent could be gained, and they could pay him with such articles as were then in the fort. The bargain was speedily closed, for Hawkins allowed them to take one of his vessels at their own price, and to give in ex-



change for it cannon, iron, and powder, from the fort, which could no longer be of any use to them. He carried his liberality still further, supplying them with twenty barrels of meal, six casks of beans, a hogshead of salt, a hundred pounds of wax for candles, and fifty pairs of shoes; and bestowing upon the commander, as a testimony of personal regard, a jar of oil, another of vinegar, a barrel of olives, and a quantity of rice and biscuit. He likewise gave presents to all the principal officers. "So that I may justly affirm," says Laudonnière, "that we received as many courtesies from him as it is possible to receive from any man living; in which he has certainly acquired the reputation of a good and charitable man, deserving to be esteemed by us all as much as if he had saved our lives."\* Captain Hawkins then sailed for England.

---

\* Basanier's *Histoire Notable*, p. 97. An account of this visit is given by the author of Hawkins's Second Voyage, but he makes no mention of these acts of generosity. *Hakluyt*, Vol. III. p. 517.

In the British Museum is a curious old manuscript, (*MSS. Additional, No. 1447*), purporting to be "The Relacion of Davyd Ingram, a Saylor, reported unto Sir Frauncys Walsingham, Knight, her Majestie's principall Secretarye, and to Sir George Peckham, Knight, and dyvers others of good Judgment and Creditt, in August and September, 1582." Ingram says, that he was one of the sailors left on shore in the Gulf of Mexico by Captain

From this time the spirits of the whole party, so lately depressed to the lowest ebb of despondency, were buoyed up by the full tide of hope and expectation. All their thoughts and labors were now employed in preparing their provisions and lading the ship. By the 15th of August every thing was in readiness, and they waited only for a fair wind to hoist the sails, and turn the prow towards their native land. In this state of anxious suspense they were detained till the 28th, when the wind and tide became favorable, and they were on the point of departing; but, just at this moment, the sails of several vessels were discovered at sea approaching the coast. They proved to be a fleet from France, under the command of Captain John Ribault.

---

Hawkins, in October, 1568, (*Hawkins's Third Voyage*; Hakluyt, Vol. III. p. 525,) and that he, with two others, Browne and Twyde, travelled through the country towards the north-east for eleven months, when they came to the ocean about sixty leagues west of Cape Breton; having passed over the distance, according to his judgment, of two thousand miles. They here found a French vessel, which took them to Havre-de-Grace, in France, before the end of the year 1569. There are many incredible things in Ingram's narrative, but there seems no good reason to doubt the fact, that he and his companions passed through the country from Florida to Canada; and that they thus performed this tour through the wilderness more than a hundred years before the interior was visited by any other European.

## CHAPTER V.

*Third Voyage to Florida. — Ribault takes Command of the Colony. — Arrival of the Spanish Fleet under Menendez. — St. Augustine founded. — Ribault prepares to attack the Spanish Fleet. — Fort Caroline assaulted and taken by the Spaniards. — Slaughter of the French. — Laudonnière returns to France.*

THE tumults and distractions of civil war having in some degree subsided, the King of France and his ministers, urged by the persevering solicitations of the Admiral Coligni, resolved to prosecute with renewed vigor the scheme of colonization in America. As early as January, 1565, eight months after the departure of Laudonnière's squadron from France, a royal commission was issued to Captain Ribault, ordering him to equip seven vessels, and put them in readiness for a voyage with as much expedition as possible. The entire command was intrusted to him, with instructions not to land in any country belonging to other powers, especially in no part of the possessions of the King of Spain, but to take his course directly across the ocean to Florida.

So many soldiers were now out of employ-

ment, that he had the advantage of making a selection, and found no difficulty in engaging the services of as many as he wanted. To these were added volunteers, who pressed into his ranks, influenced by the same motives that had operated so powerfully in the former voyages. Neither the distresses at Port Royal, nor the hazards of the enterprise, checked the love of adventure, or obscured the brilliant visions of wealth and ease with which their imaginations were warmed and beguiled. Some of them embarked with their wives and children, apparently intending to search out for themselves and families a permanent residence, and to connect their future destiny with the rising fortunes of a new community ; or it may be, that these persecuted Huguenots, like the Pilgrims of New England, sought to escape from their troubles, and the terrors that awaited them, and to enjoy their faith and peace undisturbed, by relying on the arm of a protecting Providence in the wilderness of a remote land.

Captain Ribault sailed from Dieppe on the 22d of May. A storm drove him into the port of Havre-de-Grace ; and head winds compelled him to anchor for two weeks in the Isle of Wight, whence he departed on the 14th of June. Precisely two months from that date all his vessels arrived at the coast of Florida, but so far

to the south that he did not reach the River May till fifteen days afterwards.\*

In the morning of the 29th of August, the day after his arrival, Captain Ribault, leaving his ships at anchor on the outside of the bar, entered the river with six barges filled with soldiers, and landed below the fort. As yet he had held no communication with Laudonnière, although the latter had sent a boat to the fleet, which returned in company with the barges. As soon as the troops were landed, they marched in battle array along the bank of the river, and Laudonnière, suspecting them to be enemies, put his men under arms and prepared to defend the fort according to the measure of his strength. When he was on the point of discharging his field-pieces, the cry was raised that they were Frenchmen, commanded by Captain Ribault. This unexpected and welcome intelligence instantly put a new face on affairs, and the gloom of suspicion and parade of war were changed into extravagant demonstrations of joy.

The cause of this strange mode of approach was soon explained. Laudonnière's enemies, who had returned to France in the two vessels which he sent back after his arrival in Florida, had circulated reports to his disadvantage, char-

---

\* Challeux's *Discours*, &c. p. 13.

ging him with a tyrannical exercise of his powers, with the assumption of an authority above his instructions, and with the design of advancing himself by indirect means, rather than by the influence and support of his great patron, to whom alone he was indebted for the responsible station in which he had been placed.

There would seem to have been no other grounds for these charges, than the disappointment and personal pique of some of the adventurers. They had the effect, nevertheless, to excite doubts and suspicions in the minds of the ministers, and especially of Coligni, who was the soul of the enterprise, giving it life and motion. Hence Ribault was appointed to supersede Laudonnière, who was recalled by a letter from the Admiral; a letter of kindness, however, and not of censure, purporting that the King desired his presence in France, that he might avail himself of his knowledge to determine whether he should continue to sustain the colony in Florida, or abandon it altogether.

Ribault was satisfied, from what he saw and a brief inquiry, that his predecessor had been unjustly accused, and endeavored to prevail upon him to remain in the colony, offering to build another fort, and give him a separate command over his own people; but Laudonnière, though

duly recognizing the liberal spirit with which this proposal was made, declined acceding to it, saying that self-respect and a sense of honor forbade his descending to a second place where he had held the first ; and moreover, duty to himself and his sovereign required his immediate return to France, where alone he could free his character from the false aspersions which had been maliciously cast upon it by his enemies. Perfect harmony, however, subsisted for the time being between the two commanders. Ribault's three smallest vessels could cross the bar, and they were ordered up the river to the fort, where a quantity of provisions was taken on shore and stored in the houses.

They were soon called to take part in other scenes. In the afternoon of the 4th of September, five ships were observed coming from sea. Before dark, they anchored within speaking distance of Ribault's four ships near the bar. At this distance, they were of course known to be Spanish vessels.\* Nothing was said on either side for some time, till the Spaniards called to the

---

\* Laudonnière says there were six Spanish vessels, and De Thou enlarges the number to eight ; but Barcia, Mendoza, and Challeux speak only of five. This is worthy of notice, in reference to the course afterwards pursued by Ribault, who resolved to attack the Spanish fleet with three vessels only.

nearest French vessel, saying they were friends, and inquiring after the health of the French commander and principal captains, calling them by name. Deeming it prudent to be on their guard, the French unloosed their sails in the night, and at the dawn of day, perceiving demonstrations of a suspicious nature on board the Spanish ships, they cut their cables and put to sea. The Spaniards made sail after them, discharging volleys of cannon, and chasing them all day without being able to overtake them, and at night they turned back towards the coast. The French then became the pursuers, and saw two or three of the smaller vessels enter a river eight or ten leagues south of the River May, and the larger ones at anchor near the bar. They also ascertained that the Spaniards put soldiers and provisions on shore at some distance above the river's mouth. With this intelligence they returned to their former anchorage, except the *Trinity*, the largest ship, which had gone further out to sea.\*

This is Laudonnière's account; but Mendoza, the Spanish priest, who was on board the fleet as chaplain to the expedition, relates the

---

\* The Spaniards had discovered the river a few days before, while on their way up the coast, and had given it the name of St. Augustine.



particulars somewhat differently. He says, that after they had come to anchor, and there had been a long silence, the Spanish general hailed the nearest vessel, and was answered, "France." To which he replied, "And what are you doing in the territories of King Philip? Begone, for I see not what you have to do here." To the inquiry who their commander was, the Spaniards answered, Pedro Menendez de Aviles. The writer observes, that when this General, just as the French were setting sail, demanded of one of the captains, in the name of King Philip, to surrender, the demand was met "by a very uncivil response;" and the General showed his sense of this rudeness by several discharges of his culverins, which the chaplain thinks did mischief; but he adds, "These enraged devils are such adroit seamen, and manœuvred so well, that we could not take one of them." \*

Barcia gives a different version of the story, in one part at least sufficiently remarkable. After the first salutation, Menendez asked the French whether they were Catholics or Lutherans; and when they answered, "Lutherans of the new religion," and inquired who he was and what was the object of the fleet, he said, "I am Pedro Menendez, commander of this armament, which

---

\* Mendoza's *Mémoire* in Ternaux's *Recueil*, p. 198.

belongs to the King of Spain, Don Philip the Second. I have come hither to hang and destroy all the Lutherans whom I shall find either on land or sea, according to my orders received from the King, which are so precise as to deprive me of the power of saving any one whatsoever; and these orders I shall execute to the letter; but if I should meet with any Catholic on board your vessels, he shall receive good treatment. As for the heretics, they shall die." It is no wonder that this insulting and atrocious declaration should have been interrupted by the French with scoffs and cries of indignation, reproach, and shame upon its authors and abettors, as the Spanish historian further relates.\*

Whatever may have been the precise facts respecting this first rencounter, it is clear that the Spaniards gave sufficient warning to the French of their having come with hostile designs, prepared not only to resist aggression, but to execute vengeance. When Ribault saw his three ships at anchor near the bar, the largest, called the *Trinity*, having kept to sea, he went down the river in a boat, and met Captain Causette, who commanded one of the ships, and learned from him all that had happened. Hastening back to the fort, he called a council of the principal

---

\* Barcia's *Ensayo Chronologico*, p. 75.

officers, and stated to them his opinion that it was necessary to go immediately in search of the Spaniards with the three ships and all his force, and then asked their advice. Laudonnière was opposed to the enterprise, as leading to great hazards at a season when sudden winds and tempests raged on the coast, and as exposing those left in the fort to imminent danger, if he should be driven far away to sea.

Some of the officers were of this opinion, and advised that at any rate they should wait for the return of the *Trinity*, that they might have the advantage of their entire force ; but Ribault, with his accustomed firmness, adhered to his purpose. Just at this moment an Indian chief came to the fort, and informed them that the Spaniards were fortifying themselves with breastworks and trenches on the bank of the river where they had landed. As this place was known to be not more than eight or ten leagues over land from Fort Caroline, there could scarcely be room to doubt that the Spaniards were meditating an attack by a rapid march across the country.

Captain Ribault was sanguine in the belief, however, that by seizing their ships and assailing them in their own quarters, he should draw them effectually away from any such scheme. He ordered his men on board, fully armed and equipped, with as much despatch as possible, and

then requested Laudonnière to let him take such of his officers and soldiers as were fit for effective service. This he at first declined, as it would leave the fort defenceless. Ribault assured him that he was bound to pursue this enterprise, and produced his instructions from the Admiral Coligni, to which was added a postscript to the following purport ; " While closing this letter, I have received certain advice, that Don Pedro Menendez is about to depart from Spain to the coast of Florida. You will take care not to suffer him to encroach upon us, any more than he would that we should encroach upon him." Confirmed by this order, Ribault persisted in his enterprise, and Laudonnière allowed him to take such of his soldiers as he chose, at the head of whom were the brave Ottigny and Arlac.

Menendez had acquired renown and an immense fortune by his exploits in the New World ; but the artifices of his enemies, and certain obliquities of conduct discreditable to his character, had brought him for some time into a sort of disgrace at the court of Spain. His courage, ability, and enterprise, being unquestionable, however, the King appointed him to the command of an expedition to Florida, at first apparently with the view only to discovery and an examination of the coasts. The plan was enlarged,

and Menendez was authorized to make conquests, establish a permanent colony, and become its governor for a term of years, with extraordinary powers and privileges; being armed moreover with that terrible engine of oppression and cruelty, a special injunction from his sovereign to plant the cross and disseminate the Christian faith in heathen lands, by the sword of the Spirit, if practicable, or by the sword of the flesh, the tortures of the body, and the terrors of death, if necessary. While the preparations were in progress, it was made known to the court of Spain, that the Huguenots were escaping from persecution and slaughter in their own country to hide themselves among the savages in the wilds of Florida. The powers of Menendez were again enlarged, and he was ordered to exterminate these pestilent heretics in whatever corner of the world he should find them, whether on the broad ocean, or in the deep forests and marshes of a barbarous country.

In so holy a work, the King would not stint his liberality. Other ships were added to the armament, and other treasures to its funds. Men flocked to its standard, as to that of a new crusade; soldiers, mariners, adventurers, and ecclesiastics, to the number, as stated by Barcia, of two thousand six hundred and forty-six persons, with a fleet of eleven ships, one of

them being a galleon of more than nine hundred tons. Storms and disasters in the West Indies scattered this fleet, so that when Menendez arrived at the coast of Florida, he had only five vessels left, one of which was the galleon, and about one thousand persons of all descriptions on board.\*

Menendez himself landed on the 8th of September, at the place where his men had been employed for a day or two in throwing up a fortification. The landing was attended with great pomp and ceremony, banners displayed, the sound of trumpets and other instruments of war, and the discharge of artillery. Mendoza, the chaplain, walked in front, with a cross in his hand, chanting a hymn. The General and his whole company kneeled down and kissed the cross, and then he took formal possession of the country in the name of the King of Spain. And thus was laid the foundation of the present town of St. Augustine, more than forty years earlier than that of any other town on the American continent north of Mexico. There were now six hundred men in the fort bearing arms. The next day the General went down to his ships anchored at the bar,

---

\* Barcia's *Ensayo Chronologico*, p. 68. — Ternaux's *Recueil*, pp. 187, 191.

and employed his barges in taking out provisions. He was there when Ribault's little fleet came in sight, and a conflict was prevented at first by a calm and low tide, and next by a sudden storm, which drove the French vessels out to sea. Meantime one of the Spanish ships was despatched to Spain, and the galleon to Havana, the latter for the purpose of bringing forward an additional force which was known to be in that place.\*

As soon as the works at Fort St. Augustine were sufficiently advanced to afford security against any sudden attack, Menendez determined to march against Fort Caroline. An advanced party was ordered to clear a road; and on the 17th of September, he began his march with five hundred men well armed with arquebuses and pikes, accompanied by two Indian chiefs as guides, each soldier taking twelve pounds of bread and a flask of wine. Two days later,

---

\* Mendoza, in Ternaux's *Recueil*, pp. 206, 208. Charlevoix says, that on board the galleon, called the *San Pelayo*, were several French prisoners, who had fallen into the hands of Menendez, and whom he had ordered to be sent to the Inquisition in Spain by way of Hispaniola. Soon after the galleon sailed from the River St. Augustine, these prisoners joined the sailors in a mutiny, and deprived the officers of the command. They then took the vessel into Denmark. *Hist. de la Nouv. France*, Liv. II.

another small party followed, with a further supply of provisions, and attended by the fervent prayer of the chaplain, as he informs us, "that God would do all that was necessary to enable them to propagate his holy Catholic religion, and destroy the heretics." The rain fell in torrents night and day, and the route lay through a continued marsh, intersected with stagnant waters and running streams; but all obstacles were overcome by the zeal and resolution which animated every breast; and at early dawn on the morning of the 20th, Menendez beheld from a little eminence the French fort, resting in apparent security at the distance of a few hundred yards.

While Laudonnière was preparing to return to France, he had taken the timbers from one side of the fort to aid in constructing a vessel. After Ribault's departure, he used as much diligence as possible in repairing this breach, but the work was not yet completed. Moreover, his means of defence were at all points feeble and ill combined. Ribault had left eighty-six persons, some of whom were women and children, and only nine or ten had ever borne arms. Among those of Laudonnière's own party were no more than seventeen soldiers in a condition for service, and those who were still disabled by the wounds they had received in the battle



with Outina's warriors. There were also volunteers, artisans, and servants, all of them unskilled in arms. Challeux states the whole number of souls in the fort to have been two hundred and forty.

Guards and sentinels were regularly stationed, but the rain had been so incessant during the night, and for three or four days preceding, that the men who had taken their turns in keeping watch were more or less exhausted, and no one dreamed that an enemy would brave the elements to approach them in so unpropitious a season.

The Spaniards, advancing cautiously, were not seen till they were near the walls of the fort, and then they rushed forward with great impetuosity, entering two breaches that had not yet been closed, and committing an indiscriminate slaughter upon all that came in their way. Laudonnière, roused by the tumult, sprang from his door with his target and sword in hand, calling aloud for his soldiers. He was instantly met by an armed band, among whom he beheld a treacherous French sailor, one of those who had stolen his boats and fled to the West Indies, now returned to guide the Spaniards to the destruction of his countrymen, himself being foremost in the work of death. For a moment, Laudonnière warded off the enemies' pikes with

his target ; but seeing no hope of relief, he took to flight, and had the good fortune to find his way through one of the breaches in the wall, and to elude his pursuers, under cover of the woods. In short, the assault was so sudden and overwhelming, that no resistance was made. Some were slain in their beds, and others while flying they knew not whither ; a few escaped from the rage of their foes by leaping from the walls and running to the forest. According to Mendoza, the number killed was one hundred and forty-two, while not a man of the Spaniards was either killed or wounded.\*

The condition of the unhappy fugitives was deplorable in the extreme. Destitute of food,

---

\* The slaughter is represented to have been indiscriminate, though the apologists of Menendez declare his orders to have been, that women, and children under the age of fifteen, should be spared. French writers also accuse the Spaniards of having committed an act of cruel mockery at the close of this tragic scene. They say that several of the victims were hanged on a tree, to which was affixed the inscription, *Not as Frenchmen, but as Lutherans*. It is proper to remark, that no mention is made of this circumstance by Laudonnière, Le Moyne, or Challeux, the only persons in the fort who have left a record of the events. They could not have been witnesses of this transaction, however, if it occurred, for it must have taken place after they had fled to the woods. Barcia calls it a fiction ; but Barcia defends and applauds all the doings of Menendez.

and almost of clothing, exposed to be hunted and butchered by the Spaniards, or murdered by hostile Indians, and some of them wounded, their imaginations were beset on every side by the dark images of despondency and despair. A single gleam of hope remained. The three small vessels, which had crossed the bar, were still in the river, two of them near its mouth feebly equipped; the other anchored in the middle of the stream opposite to the fort, well manned, and in good order. This was called the *Pearl*, commanded by James Ribault, of whom Le Moyne speaks as being the son of Captain John Ribault.

The wretched wanderers resolved to make an effort to gain these vessels. The attempt was dangerous, because, by thus keeping in the neighborhood of the fort, they might at any moment fall into the hands of their enemies; for their way led through tangled thickets, dense forests of reeds, and marshes inundated with water.

It happened that after they fled from the fort, the larger portion of them assembled in two parties. Some of Laudonnière's party left him and went to an Indian village, while the others took their course towards the mouth of the river. Two of them, who were good swimmers,

proceeded in advance, and the next morning descried the ships, sailing upward along the bank of the river, having received news of the capture of the fort by one who had escaped in a boat. The night was passed by Laudonnière standing in water above his middle, and so enfeebled by recent sickness and exhaustion, that he was obliged to be supported by his companions. The ships' boats came into a creek and took them off, with others who were found among the reeds. Challeux, who was with the other party, draws a moving picture of their distresses. Six of their number, disheartened at the gloomy prospect before them, resolved to throw themselves upon the tender mercy of their enemies. As they approached the fort, every man was set upon and murdered by the Spaniards. This shocking spectacle was beheld by some of the party, who stood on an eminence overlooking the plain between them and the fort. Nothing now remained for them but to make the best of their way to the vessels. Many disasters befell them in their progress through the marshes and across deep waters; but at last, after two days and nights, according to Le Moyne, they overtook their companions with Laudonnière, so much worn down with fatigue and hunger, that the sailors carried them to the

boats. The whole number thus saved was twenty-six. Le Moyne says that some of those who escaped from the fort fled to the Indians.

Meantime, the *Pearl* dropped down the river. Both Laudonnière and Challeux complain of the timid conduct of the commander, who had beheld the massacre, at the distance of a hundred yards from the fort, without firing a shot. He had also admitted the treacherous French sailor to come on board with a summons from Menendez to surrender two of his ships, and had neither seized the traitor, nor resented the insult, although, besides sailors, he had on board more than sixty soldiers.\*

The company being now together, the officers consulted as to the course next to be pursued, and it was agreed that they should immediately return to France in the *Pearl*, and in another vessel called the *Greyhound*, commanded by Captain Maillard. The remaining vessels, including the one bought of Captain Hawkins, after their furniture had been taken out, were burned or sunk. They sailed on the 25th of September, but separated the day following, and did not meet again. Laudonnière, in the *Greyhound*, owing to the unskillfulness of his pilot, entered the harbor of Swansey in Wales, where he and

---

\* Le Moyne's *Brevis Narratio*, p. 26.

some of his companions went on shore, sending the vessel to France. They stayed in England a few days, till their health and strength were somewhat restored. After a boisterous voyage, the *Pearl* arrived at Rochelle.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

*Menendez returns in Triumph to St. Augustine.*

*— Ribault's Vessels wrecked on the Coast of Florida. — Deplorable Condition of the French.*

*— They attempt to find their Way to Fort Caroline. — Met by Menendez, who refuses to grant them Terms of Surrender. — Ribault and his companions massacred by the Spaniards.*

MENENDEZ remained two or three days only at Fort Caroline, which was now named San Matheo. Leaving a garrison of three hundred soldiers, he returned to St. Augustine, where he was received with the honors of a triumphal procession. The worthy ecclesiastic, Mendoza, who acted a prominent part in the ceremony, was enraptured with the splendor of the scene, and the glorious victory achieved by the great

General, who, he says, "like a gentleman and a good Christian, prostrated himself before the cross, and poured out a thousand thanks to the Lord for the wonderful favors he had received. The zeal of Christianity is so ardent in him, that all his troubles and pains serve as a repose for his spirit ; certainly no human power could support all that he has suffered ; but a burning desire to serve our Lord, and destroy this Lutheran sect, the enemy of our holy Catholic religion, has rendered him less sensible to the ills he has endured." Among the trophies of victory was a large quantity of Lutheran books, and cards exhibiting strange figures, supposed to be in derision of the saints, and "a grand magical Lutheran cosmography," all which could be no other than ministers of mischief and diabolical agents in propagating heresy.\*

During the absence of Menendez, a French sailor was found by some Spanish fishermen and brought to the fort. He had been wrecked a day or two before, with fifteen of his countrymen, who had been sent in a small bark to reconnoitre the coast and the motions of the Spaniards. A party of armed men was immediately despatched to the place, about four leagues to the south of St. Augustine, probably

---

\* Ternaux's *Recueil*, pp. 223, 224.

at the mouth of the river now known as Matanzas Inlet, where they took possession of the bark, got it afloat, and returned with it to the fort. They saw on the shore the bodies of fifteen Frenchmen, who had been murdered by the Indians.

The circumstances attending the fate of Ribault and his companions are so differently related by the French and Spanish writers, that perhaps it is not possible to arrive at the exact truth. It is known, however, that the *Trinity*, his largest ship, joined him about the time he left the bar of the River St. Augustine; that a terrible tempest arose and raged without intermission, and that four or five days afterwards all his vessels were driven ashore and dashed in pieces at some place near Cape Canaveral, about fifty leagues south of the River May, and of course somewhat more than a hundred miles south of St. Augustine. Every man escaped with his life, except Captain La Grange, who was drowned in attempting to float to land on a broken mast. Very few articles were rescued from the sinking ships.

A situation more forlorn and distressing can scarcely be imagined. More than five hundred men (the Spanish accounts say five hundred and fifty) were here thrown together on a desolate shore, with no other means of subsistence than



the herbs and roots supplied by an arid soil, and such shell-fish as they could collect on the beach. Their first resolution, and indeed the only one which could afford any hope of relief, was to seek their friends at Fort Caroline, whose tragical fate they had not yet learned. The distance was at least one hundred and fifty miles, through an unknown country. In melancholy groups they wandered onward, unconscious that the destroyer was lurking in their path, and that every step led them nearer to their doom.

It would appear, that they divided themselves into two parties; the first, consisting of two hundred men, proceeding at a considerable distance in advance of the other. Ribault and his principal officers were with the second party. The only account that has been transmitted of the particulars relating to the first party is derived from Spanish writers. Mendoza, who professes to relate what he saw, tells the story as follows.

On the 28th of September, "while the General was taking his *siesta*, to repose himself a little after the fatigues he had suffered," a company of Indians came to the camp, and signified by signs that they had seen the wreck of a vessel on the coast below. The General immediately ordered fifty men to arm themselves, and proceed in a boat, while he marched with

another party by land. The same evening, they were all on shore near the bank of a river, about five leagues from Fort St. Augustine, when fires were seen on the opposite side of the river, which were believed to have been kindled by the French. In the morning, the General put on a sailor's dress, and, having concealed the larger part of his troops in the bushes, took a French prisoner with him in a boat, and passed so far over the river, that he could call to those on the other side. A sailor then swam out to the boat, who informed him of their unfortunate shipwreck and present condition. He then ordered the sailor to go back, and tell his compatriots to surrender themselves, or he would put them all to the sword.

A French officer soon afterwards came to Menendez, and said they would surrender on condition that their lives should be spared. "A long discussion ensued, when our brave General declared that he would not give his word; that they must surrender at discretion; because, if he granted their lives, it was his pleasure that they should be under obligations to him for the favor, and, on the contrary, if he should put them to death, they could then have no ground of complaint." When they deliberated on the subject, finding no other resource, they all surrendered at discretion. Mendoza adds, "Seeing that they

were Lutherans, the General condemned them all to death; but, as I was a priest, and had the bowels of a man, I besought him to accord to me the favor, that he would not put to death those whom we should discover to be Christians. He granted my request. I made inquiry, and found ten or twelve, whom we selected from the number. All the others were executed, because they were Lutherans, enemies of our holy Catholic faith.” \*

In another Spanish account, written by Dr. Solis de las Meras, a brother-in-law of Menendez, who was in the expedition, the particulars are described more in detail, and somewhat differently, though the essential parts are nearly the same. He says the French requested to be sent to France, or at any rate to be permitted to remain with the Spaniards till the means of their return could be obtained, and urged upon Menendez that there was no war between the two nations. It was true, he replied, that the Catholics of France were their friends; but not so with those of the new sect, whom he held to be enemies, and made war upon them with fire and sword, with the utmost cruelty, wherever he found them, on land or sea; that he had come to Florida to establish the gospel and the holy

---

\* Ternaux's *Recueil*, pp. 227 - 232.

Catholic faith ; that, if the French “would give up their standards and arms, and throw themselves upon his mercy, he would do towards them as God should grant him grace ;” but if they refused this proposal, they need expect from him neither friendship nor truce. Why they should rely on the mercy or the honor of a man, who had spoken in this manner, is not explained ; but so it was ; they crossed the river and delivered up their arms ; and then they were divided into small parties, with their hands tied behind their backs, and marched to a line drawn in the sand by the General with his cane, where they were all butchered in cold blood, except eight, who had acknowledged themselves to be Catholics.\*

---

\* Barcia's *Ensayo Chronologico*, p. 86. In this work, the narrative of Solis is published in his own words. Both Barcia and Solis are the apologists of Menendez in all his acts of barbarity, and represent him as the chosen instrument of God to vindicate his cause, and to implant the pure spirit of the gospel in the hearts of benighted men ; and Mendoza tells us, when exulting over the destruction of the heretics at Fort Caroline, that “the Holy Spirit enlightened the understanding of the commander” to enable him to achieve so great a victory.

One Spanish writer, however, in commenting on the language of Menendez, as recorded by Solis, seems astonished at his conduct after a promise of mercy ; for how could it be imagined that the “grace of God,” by which he professed to be guided, would turn his heart from that divine virtue ? Salazar's *Crisis del Ensayo*, &c. p. 23.

The events, which happened to Captain Ribault and his party, were related by two French sailors, who had the good fortune to escape the massacre and return home. One, a native of Dieppe, told the story to Le Moyne, by whom it was recorded ; the other, Christophe le Breton, of Havre-de-Grace, told the same to Challeux, who appended it to his own narrative. The sailor of Dieppe gives the following account. After Ribault and his companions had travelled for some distance, they chanced to find an Indian canoe. It was then agreed that Vasseur, with five or six men, should endeavor to proceed in this canoe to the River May. They soon returned with the intelligence, that they had seen Spanish standards flying on the other side of a river, which gave proof that their enemies were near at hand.

A difference of opinion now arose as to what should be done, some advising to shun the Spaniards, others to hold a parley with them. The latter opinion prevailed, and two officers, Verdier and Caille, were sent on this errand. When they were seen by the Spaniards, a boat came to meet them, and those on board conversed with them in a friendly manner. They told the French that their countrymen at Fort Caroline had all been sent to France in a large vessel, provided with everything necessary, and said their General, renowned for his clemency and kindness, would

treat Ribault and his men in the same manner, and that they might make this report to him. On receiving this message, Ribault and the majority were disposed to confide in the clemency and honor of Menendez ; others were suspicious, and listened coldly to this proposal.

The larger number agreeing with him, however, he commissioned Caille to go and negotiate with the Spanish General, promising in his name that they would deliver themselves up on condition that Menendez would pledge himself under oath to spare their lives. This was done, and the pledge was given, not only in a most solemn form of words, but under his hand and seal in writing, confirmed by an oath.

Ribault and his followers, no longer hesitating, advanced to the bank of the river, whence they were taken across by the Spanish boats. He and Ottigny were immediately separated from the others, and led away. A few only were brought over at a time, and when set on shore they were bound by the arms, four together, back to back, and closely guarded. This spectacle afforded an ominous premonition of what was to follow. Ribault and Ottigny called to the Spanish General, reminding him of his promise and his oath, and beseeching him to spare the lives of defenceless men, who had confided in his honor, and had voluntarily put themselves in his power ;

but all in vain ; their prayers made no impression upon deaf ears and a heart of stone. The scene was soon closed. A soldier, by the order of his commander, thrust a dagger into the breast of Ribault ; the same hand inflicted a like blow upon Ottigny ; they fell and expired together. Their companions were butchered in a similar manner, like cattle bound for the slaughter ; and, as if in justification of this unparalleled perfidiousness and cruelty, they were told, in their last agony, that they were "Lutherans, enemies of God and the Virgin Mary."\*

The narrative of the other sailor, Christophe le Breton, accords with this in all the essential points, the discrepancies being in those particulars only, which would naturally present themselves under different aspects to two persons in different situations. He adds, however, that thirty sailors, carpenters, and others, who might be useful to the Spaniards, were selected from the number, and saved.†

It should be remarked, moreover, that these narratives are entirely independent of each other. The two sailors had never met from the time of the massacre ; nor had there been any kind of intercourse between them. The incidents attend-

---

\* Le Moyne's *Brevis Narratio*, p. 28.

† Ternaux's *Recueil*, p. 292 - 300.

ing the escape of the sailor of Dieppe were extraordinary. He was bound, and supposed to be killed with his companions, whose bodies were left on the ground where they were slain. But it happened that he was only stunned by the blow, and coming to his senses in the night, he contrived to cut the cords and release himself; and then he fled to the Indians in the interior, with whom he remained several months. At length he ventured back to the Spanish fort, where he was received and treated as a slave, till he was put on board a vessel bound for Havana. This vessel was captured at sea by the French, and he was thus restored to his native country. The other sailor was carried by the Spaniards to Seville, whence he escaped to Bourdeaux.\*

---

\* In the *Epistola Supplicatoria*, or Humble Petition, to the King, by the widows, orphans, and other relatives of those who had been slain in Florida, the facts agree in almost every particular with the narratives of these two sailors. This document is dated the 22d of May, 1566. Ternaux's *Bibliothèque*, p. 24. It must therefore have been drawn up before the sailors' return to France, and of course the facts were obtained from other persons, who had escaped the massacre, and found their way soon afterwards to their own country. The petition declares, in the most positive language, that Menendez pledged his faith with an oath to spare the lives of Ribault and his companions; and that, in the assault upon Fort Caroline, an indiscriminate slaughter was committed upon men, women, and children. The coincidence of these three separate accounts is remarkable; and



The Spanish accounts differ from the above in many of the details, though they are the same as to the result. Solis represents Ribault as crossing the river in person, holding a conference with Menendez, and endeavoring to prevail on him to furnish a vessel to transport himself and his men to France, offering a hundred thousand ducats for their ransom. Menendez replied, as he had done before, that no other terms could be granted, than that they should surrender at discretion, and place themselves entirely at his disposal. One hundred and fifty accepted these conditions. Ten only were brought over the river at a time, and as soon as they landed, both Ribault and all the others were bound, with their hands behind their backs. They were then asked whether they were Catholics or Lutherans. Ribault replied, that "he and his companions were of the new religion." Without further ceremony Menendez gave orders for their execution, which orders were immediately obeyed. Twelve musicians, and four others, who called themselves Catholics, were saved from the slaughter.\*

---

the petition, intended for the King and the nation, should be regarded with much confidence. *Brevis Narratio*; De Bry, P. II. Chauveton, *De Gallorum Expeditione in Floridam*, at the end of his translation of Benzoni's *Historia del Mondo Nuovo*, p. 471.

\* Barcia's *Ensayo Chronologico*, p. 89.

About three weeks after this event, says Solis, the savages came to St. Augustine with intelligence, that the French were building a fort and a vessel on the coast near Cape Canaveral. It was at once inferred, that these could be no other than the unfortunate remnant of Captain Ribault's company, who had refused to accept the terms of surrender. With three hundred soldiers Menendez left St. Augustine on the 23d of October, and marched to the place; but the French, discovering his approach, fled to the high grounds at some distance from the shore, and prepared for the best defence they could make. Menendez sent a messenger to them, with the promise of their lives and good treatment, if they would surrender. The larger number accepted this offer. About twenty declared that they would rather be devoured by the savages, than trust themselves in such hands. The unfinished fortification and vessel were burned, and the whole party then returned to St. Augustine; the General, adds the Spanish writer, making good his word to the French prisoners, and ultimately gaining many of them over to the Catholic faith.

The whole number of the French, men, women, and children, killed by the Spaniards in Florida, is stated, in the petition to the King, to have been more than nine hundred. It is pos-

sible, however, that some, who were supposed to have been killed, may have escaped the slaughter, and returned to their country after the petition was written.

In reviewing the incidents of this tragedy, it is not easy to explain all the motives which actuated the Spanish leader and his chief accomplices. On one point, and one only, there is a decided conflict between the French and Spanish accounts; namely, the fact as to Menendez pledging his word to save the lives of Ribault and his companions, in case they would surrender. The former affirm that he did; the latter that he did not. But, after all, this is no more than a point of honor; whereas, his inhumanity, his cruelty, and bloodthirsty bigotry, are acknowledged by every writer, friend and foe, and in fact applauded by his apologists. It requires no stretch of credulity to believe, that the man who could show himself so great an adept in these vices and their attendant crimes, might set a very low value upon the virtue of honor. It is incredible, that Ribault and his companions would have given themselves up, in the way they did, many of them with arms in their hands, unless they had reason to expect mercy, if not magnanimity. The pretence of religion in committing so dishonorable an act and so barbarous a crime can be tolerated only by a mind, in which the sympathies

of nature and a sense of responsibility to a Divine Power are extinct. Let the conduct of Menendez be explained as it may, history must ever regard it as a foul and indelible stigma on his name; nor will it be rendered less dark and loathsome, by pleading the orders of his sovereign and the rabid fanaticism of the times.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

*Fourth Voyage to Florida under the Chevalier de Gourgues. — He lands at the River Somme. — Preparations, in Conjunction with the Indians, to attack the Spaniards on the River May. — March of the combined Forces. — Two small Forts attacked and captured.*

THE knowledge of these events was received with indignation and horror by the French people. Their countrymen had not only been butchered under circumstances of cruelty and barbarity unheard of in the intercourse of civilized men, but an insult of the deepest dye had been offered to the nation. A colony planted by the orders of the King in a territory to which no other

power had a just claim, and sustained at the public charge, had been attacked and exterminated, in a time of profound peace, without any previous warning or protest, by a nation professing to be bound to France by the strongest ties of amity and the solemn obligations of treaties. The feuds of religious dissension were for a moment forgotten, and the hatred of the new sect was absorbed in the generous burst of sympathy and patriotic feeling, which broke from every heart. The cry was universal, that the murder of their countrymen should be avenged by a just retaliation, or that such acknowledgments should be demanded from the King of Spain, as would atone for so atrocious an outrage, and restore the wounded dignity of the nation.

While this impulse was agitating every breast, the relations of those who had been slain in Florida presented a petition to the King, setting forth the facts of the case, with moving appeals to his honor as the head of the nation, to his compassion for the distressed, and to his sense of justice. They represented to him, that the emigrants to Florida had departed under his authority; that they acted in obedience to his orders; that they were employed to extend the domains, power, and glory of France; and for these reasons their sovereign was bound to afford them protection and vindicate their wrongs. They besought

him to redeem the sacred pledge thus granted to the unfortunate sufferers, as an act due to the nation and due to himself.

These appeals were unheeded. The King and the court looked upon the whole transaction, and the excitement of the people, with profound indifference. Not a finger was raised in support of the national honor; no remonstrance or complaint was presented to the Spanish court. An apathy so extraordinary and disgraceful could not but astonish the world, and engage the thoughts of men to search for some secret cause. Chauveton, who wrote only twelve years afterwards, informs us of a rumor which was current at that time, but which he does not undertake to confute or confirm. It was believed by many, that, when Ribault's expedition was first set on foot, there were those in the King's council who gave notice of it to the Spanish court, with the intimation that the persons composing the expedition, being Huguenots, might be attacked and destroyed without any displeasure to the King.\* De Thou gives credit to the same rumor, and calls it, as well he might, "infamous perfidiousness and treachery."† Whatever grounds there may have been for such an opinion, there can be no doubt that the courtiers of Charles the Ninth secretly

---

\* *Novæ Novi Orbis Hist.* ad fin. p. 469.

† *Hist. sui Temp. Lib. XLIV. § 1.*

rejoiced at the failure of a project, which had originated with Coligni, an enemy whom they feared and hated, and which had ended in the destruction of so many Huguenots, whom they detested for the resolute and uncompromising spirit with which they had engaged in the defence of their religious faith.

Coligni had now lost his power and his influence, and could no longer sustain the colony, which he had projected for a noble purpose, and planned on such broad principles as would have rendered it not only an asylum for his persecuted brethren, but the foundation of a French empire in the New World. There was one man in France, however, who resolved to avenge the injuries of his countrymen, and to rescue the nation from the disgrace of tamely suffering its honor to be insulted and contemned.

This zealous patriot was the Chevalier Dominic de Gourgues, a gentleman of Gascony, of an ancient family, distinguished for its attachment to the Catholic religion, to which he was likewise steadily devoted, as Charlevoix affirms, although Barcia calls him a "furious heretic." In a fact of this nature, the French writer could scarcely err ; and it is worthy of being remarked, since it proves that De Gourgues was not prompted to his enterprise by fanaticism or the ferocious spirit of the times. From an early

age he had been in the service of his country, employed either in France, Scotland, Piedmont, or Italy ; and few officers of his rank had gained a more brilliant reputation in war, or suffered greater reverses of fortune. When a young man, at the head of a detachment of thirty soldiers near Sienna in Tuscany, after he had fought with signal courage till nearly all those around him were slain, he was taken prisoner by the Spaniards, and sent in chains to the galleys. He was recaptured by the Turks, and again by the Maltese, and was thus restored to liberty. It is supposed, that the treatment he received from the Spaniards inflicted a deep wound upon the spirit of a brave man, and excited feelings of hostility towards that nation, which time had not assuaged. In the intervals of service on land, he had been engaged in several voyages at sea, on the coast of Africa, Brazil, and among the islands of the West Indies, thus acquiring experience in naval operations. Indeed, he is represented to have been one of the most skilful and bold navigators of his time.

When the news of the massacre of his countrymen in Florida reached France, he appears to have been in retirement, or, at any rate, unemployed. Indignant at the apathy of the court, and burning with the desire to perform what he deemed an act of just retaliation for



so barbarous a crime, equally abhorrent to humanity and degrading to his country, he determined, upon mature reflection, to carry the enterprise into effect by his own efforts, or to perish in the attempt. This resolution was formed in the early part of the year 1567. The expense of such an undertaking was formidable to a man, whose life had been spent in acquiring honor and reputation, rather than in amassing wealth; but every obstacle gradually yielded to his ardor and perseverance. By selling his property, and borrowing money of his friends, he collected the means for equipping three small vessels, so constructed that they could be moved by oars in a calm sea, and drawing so little water that they could pass over the bars of the rivers. He stored them with provisions sufficient to serve his whole company for a year. One hundred soldiers armed with arquebuses, among whom were gentlemen volunteers, and eighty mariners, designed to act likewise as soldiers, and armed with cross-bows and pikes, constituted his military force.\* The sec-

---

\* This account is from *La Reprinse de la Floride*, in Ternaux's *Recueil*, p. 309. Basanier and Lescardot make the number of soldiers one hundred and fifty; De Thou, two hundred. Charlevoix says there were a hundred and fifty soldiers and volunteers, of whom one hundred were armed with cross-bows.

ond officer was Captain Casenove. The mariners were commanded by Francis Bourdelais.

The Chevalier de Gourgues communicated to no one, unless to his confidential officers, the objects of his enterprise. By the commission which he received from M. de Montluc, Lieutenant for the King in Guienne, his ostensible destination was the coast of Benin in Africa. After sailing from Bourdeaux, and leaving the Garonne, he was detained several days on the coast by contrary winds, and was obliged to run into the River Charente. He finally departed from the coast of France on the 22d of August. His vessels were separated in a storm, but they met again at the River Lor in Morocco, and he then proceeded south as far as Cape de Verd; having been attacked by three negro chiefs, instigated by the Portuguese, near Cape Blanco, where he had stopped for a few days. From Cape de Verd he shaped his course to the West Indies, landing in the Island of St. Domingo to procure water, and to repair one of the vessels, which had sprung a leak in a violent tempest. By this accident so much biscuit was damaged, as to shorten the allowance of provisions. At length the little squadron arrived at Cape St. Anthony, the western extremity of the Island of Cuba.

Here he called his men together, and for the

first time explained to them his designs. He prepared their minds by a glowing description of the treachery and cruelty of the Spaniards, the insult they had offered to the King and the French name, and the disgrace that would cloud the national character till so infamous an act should be revenged. He reminded them of the honor they would gain by performing so noble a deed. "In short," says the narrator, "he roused them to such a degree, that, although at first the thing seemed impossible, considering their small numbers and the dangers of the coast, they all promised to follow him and die with him; and the zeal of the soldiers became so ardent, that they could hardly be prevailed upon to wait for the full moon, which would enable the pilots to navigate the Bahama Channel. The mariners, who were cold at first, caught the enthusiasm of the soldiers, and were eager to press forward. At length, the moon being full, they entered the Bahama Channel, and soon discovered the coast of Florida."\*

When the vessels were passing the mouth of the River May, they were seen by the Spaniards in the fort, who supposed them to be of their own nation, and saluted them with two discharges of cannon. Captain Gourgues, will-

---

\* Ternaux's *Recueil*, p. 321.

ing to retain them in this error, returned the salute, and then put out to sea, that he might escape detection. At the approach of night he shifted his course, and in the morning came to a river, which Ribault had named the Somme, nine or ten leagues north of the May.\*

In a short time, a large company of savages was seen on the shore, armed with bows and arrows, and presenting a hostile aspect. They supposed the strangers to be Spaniards, and prepared to attack them if they should attempt to land. The Chevalier de Gourgues was well aware, that the success of his enterprise must depend on the assistance he should derive from the sav-

---

\* The original narrator of this expedition says, that Captain Gourgues first landed at the River Seine, and adds that it was fifteen leagues from the May. In this statement he is followed by all subsequent writers. Whoever will attend to the operations of Captain Gourgues, compared with those of Ribault and Laudonnière, will discover that it is manifestly a mistake. Both Ribault and Laudonnière make the Seine the first river that was discovered north of the May, and the Somme the second; whereas the above statement reverses the position of these rivers; and the narrator afterwards speaks of the Somme as being between the Seine and the May. These errors introduce much confusion into the narrative of Captain Gourgues' movements, when compared with Ribault's previous account; but this confusion will vanish when the right names of the rivers are attended to. Captain Gourgues doubtless landed at the river now known as the St. Mary's.

ages, and all his address and caution were now requisite to win their friendship and bring them over to his interest. He exhibited signs of amity and peace on board the vessels, and sent ashore his trumpeter, who had formerly been one of Laudonnière's company in the fort, and understood the language of the natives. Some of them recognized the trumpeter as an old acquaintance, and received him with much joy; and when he told them that his countrymen were on board the vessels, and had come to renew their former friendship, they rejoiced still more, and inquired why they had stayed away so long. It turned out that the chief of this band was Satouriona, who has often been mentioned before as the neighbor of Laudonnière at the fort. He sent by the trumpeter a deer as a present to Captain Gourgues, and despatched a messenger to ascertain the immediate object of his visit. The Captain told the messenger to present his thanks to King Satouriona, and assure him that what the trumpeter said to him was true, that he had come to establish friendly relations with him and the other chiefs, and to furnish them with many valuable articles which he had brought from France. He took care not to throw out any hints respecting his real purpose, till he should discover the feelings of these savages towards the Spaniards. Upon re-

ceiving this answer, Satouriona invited him to come on shore the next day, when the chiefs would be assembled to meet him.

Meantime, the mouth of the river was sounded, and, there being found a sufficient depth of water, all the vessels passed up the river to a secure anchorage. According to promise, Satouriona appeared on the shore, with several allied chiefs, and sent for Captain Gourgues, who landed with a party of soldiers carrying their arquebuses. The Indians expressed surprise, that he should come with arms to hold a treaty of peace and friendship. The Captain answered, that, seeing them with arms, he had only followed their example. Thereupon the Indians laid aside their bows and arrows, and the French did the same with their arquebuses, retaining only their swords. Satouriona was seated on a log covered with moss; he placed Captain Gourgues on a similar seat at his right hand. The other chiefs sat on the ground in a semicircle around them.

All these preliminaries being arranged with much show of ceremony, the Captain thought it his duty to open the conference, and began to speak; but he was interrupted by Satouriona, who vented bitter complaints against the Spaniards, and said they had made war continually upon his people since they took the French fort;

that they had driven them from their habitations, plundered and destroyed their corn, and killed their little children ; and that all these outrages had been committed against them on account of their former friendship for the French ; that, after the massacre at the fort, a young man was found in the woods, who had escaped, and whom he had protected and treated kindly, but the Spaniards had used every possible art to get him away and kill him, and that he would now give the young man into the hands of his countrymen.

These words were extremely agreeable to Captain Gourgues, who perceived his plans drawing to maturity with a speed which he had not ventured to anticipate. He thanked the savage chief for his good dispositions towards the French, and hoped he would continue to cherish them. As to the Spaniards, the time would come when they would be punished for their outrages, and if these had been inflicted upon the Indians in consequence of their attachment to the French, it was but just that the French should avenge them.

Upon this declaration, Satouriona quickly asked whether he intended to make war against the Spaniards. He answered, that it was certainly his intention to take vengeance for the injuries done to his nation, when a fitting occasion

should offer ; yet his first object was to renew the friendly intercourse between the French and Indians, and afterwards to come with a sufficient force to attack the Spaniards ; but since he now learned what calamities they were suffering every day from this perfidious foe, he could not but be moved with compassion by their distresses, and be almost tempted to deliver them at once from so grievous an oppression. All the chiefs exclaimed, that the day when this should be done would be the happiest of their lives. "I suppose," said the Captain, "that you would be ready to take part in such an enterprise, and not allow the French to have all the honor of rescuing you from the tyranny of the Spaniards." Satouriona replied, that he would go with him, and die with him, if it were necessary ; to which all the other chiefs responded their assent.

Having brought them to this point in a manner so unexpected, the Chevalier de Gourgues resolved to strike whilst the iron was hot. He represented to them the importance of taking the Spaniards by surprise, and of attacking them immediately, as affording the best chance of success. The great chief promised to have his forces ready in three days, and, as a pledge that he would fulfil his promise faithfully, he offered one of his wives and a son as hostages. Presents of hatchets, knives, mirrors, and divers other ar-



ticles, were then distributed among the chiefs, and they in their turn gave deer-skins, fancifully ornamented according to the fashion of the country. Satouriona honored the Captain with a more royal gift, a silver chain, which had doubtless been obtained from some Spanish wreck on the coast. He also left his nephew, Olotoraca, a brave young warrior, as a guide to the party that was to be sent out to reconnoitre the enemy during the three days of preparation.

The young Frenchman, mentioned above, whose name was Pierre Debré, rendered essential services. His knowledge of the native language enabled him to act as interpreter. He gave the intelligence, that the Spaniards had erected two small forts on the River May, below the one they had taken from the French, and that the whole number of men in the three forts was about four hundred. At the end of three days, the reconnoitring party returned, and almost at the same hour the shore was seen to be lined with Indians completely armed.

A large part of the day was consumed by the savages in performing certain ceremonies according to their custom when going to war. It was then agreed that the place of rendezvous should be the River Halimacani, which the French had named the Seine, and that the Indians should go by land, the French by water. All the sol-

diers and sixty mariners were embarked in two boats, with Captain Gourgues at their head. The three vessels, with the rest of the mariners, were left in charge of Captain Bourdelais, at their anchorage in the River Somme. At the dawn of day, the boats reached the mouth of the River Seine, or Halimacani; but at that moment the wind began to blow with such violence from the north-east, that the boats narrowly escaped from being wrecked. They came to land, however, at eight o'clock in the morning, on the south side of the river. The Indians were already at their post on the other side. Without delay, Captain Gourgues departed by land for the River Sarabay, leaving one of the boats to transport the Indians across the river, and ordering the other to pass along the coast and meet him at the Sarabay.\*

This march was extremely tedious and fatiguing, everywhere obstructed by pools of water, marshes, and tangled wood. The party arrived just before night. Three savage chieftains, each at the head of one hundred men, were on the spot to meet them. The nearest of the forts was now only two leagues distant, and the Cap-

---

\* The present name of this river is uncertain. It may have been the same as Talbot Inlet, which is between the Nassau River and the St. John's.

tain immediately set off with ten soldiers to reconnoitre the place, intending to make the attack the next morning. The darkness of the night and the obstructions in his way compelled him soon to return without accomplishing anything. One of the chiefs, named Helicopilé, then told him that he could conduct him through a route near the sea-shore, which, though somewhat longer, was free from marshes. He put himself and all his men under this guide, and ordered the other chiefs to take another route, and to meet him at a little stream near the first fort.

Before the dawn of day, they all came together at the place of rendezvous. It was found that the tide had raised the water in the stream so high, that it could not be passed. It was necessary to wait till the tide should fall, and to retire into a wood to avoid being seen by those in the fort when daylight should appear. Keeping his men concealed, Captain Gourgues took advantage of this delay to reconnoitre the fort in person. He ascertained that it was not yet completed, and saw the Spaniards at work upon the unfinished parts. As soon as the tide had fallen, he crossed the stream at a point where he was hidden from the view of the enemy by an intervening wood. The water came nearly up to their armpits, and the soldiers fastened

their powder-flasks to their helmets, carrying an arquebuse in one hand and a sword in the other. Their shoes and feet were also badly cut by the oyster shells, which abounded in the stream. The moment they had passed over, they were put in battle array.

Captain Cazenove was sent with a party to set fire to the gate, and attack on that side. The main body advanced in another direction to assault the fort where it was observed that the trenches were unfinished. The surprise was complete, for not a Spaniard was at his post, it being the hour of dinner. In a very brief space, however, a cannonier happened to mount a platform, saw the danger, and sounded the alarm to his companions. With singular coolness, he twice discharged a culverin, which was standing on the platform, and was loading it a third time, when Olotoraca, who had constantly attended Captain Gourgues, sprang from the ranks, rushed upon the Spanish soldier, and ran him through with a pike. The culverin was one which had been taken from Laudonnière. By this time the alarm had spread through the fort; but it was so soon surrounded and filled by the French and Indians, that the Spaniards had neither time to arm themselves nor to escape. An indiscriminate slaughter followed; and of the

sixty persons whom the fort contained, all were killed except a small number reserved for another fate.

The second fort was on the opposite side of the River May. The soldiers in this fort kept up an incessant fire of cannon across the river, which annoyed the assailants, who returned the compliment by counter-discharges from three pieces of artillery and the culverin found in the first fort. The French were inflamed and enraged at the sight of this culverin, which had the arms of King Henry engraved upon it, and reminded them of the massacre of their countrymen, which they had come to avenge. Captain Gourgues, conscious that everything must now depend on the rapidity of his movements, took with him eighty soldiers, entered a boat which had come round into the River May by his order, and crossed over to the other side, placing himself in a wood near the second fort. The Indians, too impatient to wait for the return of the boat, plunged into the water, each holding his bow and arrows in one hand and swimming with the other. The Spaniards, being sixty in number, terrified at the multitudes gathering around them, made no show of defence, but fled from the fort with the intention of escaping to Fort St. Matheo, three miles above, on the same side of the river. In the woods they were

met by the French in front, assailed by the Indians in the rear, and every man was slain except fifteen, who were retained as prisoners. The Captain immediately entered the fort, caused the articles found there to be transported across the river, and returned with his troops to the first fort.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The French attack and capture Fort St. Matheo, and execute all their Prisoners, in Revenge for the Cruelty of the Spaniards.—De Gourgues marches back to the River Somme.—Sails for France.—Arrives at Bourdeaux.—Coldly received at the French Court.—His Services solicited by Queen Elizabeth and Don Antonio of Portugal.—His Death.*

THESE two forts were captured on the Saturday after Easter, in April, 1568. It remained to assault Fort St. Matheo, upon which De Gourgues was too cautious to venture, until he should obtain a better knowledge of its position and strength. It happened that among the prisoners was a sergeant, who knew the height of the ramparts, and could designate all the essential parts

of the fort by a drawing. The height being known, ladders were prepared for scaling the walls. Meantime a man was found in camp, in the disguise of an Indian, whom Olotoraca declared to be a Spaniard. When pressed with questions, he confessed that he was a Spaniard, and said he had been a soldier in the other fort when it was attacked, and had disguised himself for fear of being killed by the Indians, but that he had now come to the French, preferring to throw himself upon their mercy, rather than run the hazard of being massacred by the savages. When confronted with the sergeant, he was recognized as a soldier of Fort St. Matheo; and in fact he had been sent out by the commander as a spy, which in the end he acknowledged.

Thus entrapped, the spy was compelled to act against his employers. Captain Gourgues learned from him that there were two hundred and sixty men in the large fort, and that they believed the number of the French to be two thousand. The intelligence derived from the spy and sergeant so far accorded, as to create confidence in its general accuracy. After two days' preparation, the Captain determined to march against Fort St. Matheo. He left a guard of fifteen men at the first fort, under the command of Captain Mesmes. He caused the Indians to depart in the night, and conceal themselves in the woods near

the large fort on each side of the river. Early the next morning, he crossed the river with all his remaining force, and marched towards the fort; but as soon as he was seen by the Spaniards, they began to fire two double culverins, so placed as to command the bank of the river for a considerable distance. To escape this raking fire, he turned to the left, and marched to an eminence not far distant, covered with trees, and overlooking the fort; the same position that had been occupied by Menendez before his assault.

The men were now concealed from view, while the commander had the advantage of seeing all that was going on at the fort. He had planned an attack for the next morning by an escalade, but the Spaniards brought the affair to a more speedy issue. Sixty soldiers sallied out, probably with the design of reconnoitring his position and forces. He watched their motions from the beginning; and after they had advanced a little way, he directed Captain Cazenove, with twenty men, by a circuitous route through the woods, to place himself between them and the fort. This manœuvre was no sooner executed than De Gourgues marched quickly forward with all his troops, ordering every man to reserve his fire till he should be very near the enemy, then to discharge his piece and rush upon them sword in hand. Many were killed at the first onset, and,



although the others fought bravely, they were compelled to give way. In retreating towards the fort, they were met by Cazenove and his party; and being thus surrounded and assailed on all sides, and no quarter given, they were slain to the last man.

This was an appalling scene to those remaining in the fort, who had now lost the flower of their strength, and had no reason to hope even for mercy from their foes. Believing the number of the French to be much greater than it actually was, and that resistance would be vain, they saw no chance of safety but in flight. They ran to the woods on the other side of the fort, where the Indians sprang from their ambush, fell upon them with savage fury, and overwhelmed them with a shower of arrows. Such was the force of these missiles, that one of them pierced the buckler of a Spanish officer, and passed through his body, killing him instantly. The French, who observed this flight, threw themselves in the rear of the Spaniards, cut off their retreat, and joined the Indians in the work of carnage. They were all killed but a few, who were saved with difficulty for a more ignominious death.\*

---

\* This is the French account. Barcia relates the particulars of the attack upon the large fort somewhat differently. He says, "The Governor of the fort, Gonzales de Villarroél, ordered sixty men to go out and reconnoitre the

The fort was now entered in triumph. Within its walls were found five double culverins, four of a less size, and other smaller pieces of artillery both iron and brass, eighteen casks of powder, and a large quantity of arquebuses, pikes, corselets, and bucklers. The next day the artillery was all put on board two boats, but the powder and everything else of value in the fort were destroyed by an unlucky accident. . An Indian, while preparing to cook his fish, set fire to a train of powder which the Spaniards had laid, and which communicated with the magazine.

---

enemy; but they were surrounded by the French, aided by an innumerable host of savages, rendered more ferocious and cruel by the victories they had gained. Many of the Spaniards were killed, and all the others were wounded. The Governor, seeing himself ruined, and persuaded that it was impossible to resist so large an army, which was augmented in his imagination proportionably to his fears, endeavored to escape to the woods with his men, cutting their way with the sword; and although the Indians in ambush killed some of them at the cost of many of the barbarians, yet he and others with great difficulty saved their lives." *Ensayo Chronologico*, p. 136. The author censures the Governor for not ascertaining the character of the vessels when he saw them at the mouth of the river, and taking the precaution to call in his men from the small forts, and send to Havana for succors. The circumstance of the escape of the Governor and some of his men is not mentioned by the French writers, and it might easily happen without the knowledge of Captain Gourgues or any of his party.

The whole was blown up by the explosion; the houses, built of pine, took fire and burned to the ground, and every article within them was consumed. Fortunately no person was injured, as the soldiers were employed beyond the limits of the fort.

The time had now come for the closing scene of the tragedy. Captain Gourgues caused to be brought before him all the individuals who had been taken alive at this fort, and ordered them to be placed on the spot where the companions of Ribault and Laudonnière had been executed. He then addressed them in a formal speech, reminding them of the injury they had done to the King of France, in murdering his subjects, and violently seizing upon the territory he had conquered and the fort he had caused to be built; and that they ought to have reflected, that such infamous treachery and detestable cruelty, exercised against so powerful a King and so generous a nation, would not go unpunished. If the two Christian and Catholic Kings had been enemies, and engaged in deadly wars, there could have been no possible excuse for treachery and extreme cruelty; and especially, when their majesties were friends and in the closest alliance, there was no epithet sufficiently strong to stigmatize such atrocious conduct. "But notwithstanding," he adds, "it is not possible for you to suffer the

punishment you have deserved, yet it is just that you should endure that which an enemy may rightfully inflict; to the end that, by your example, others may be taught to preserve the peace and alliance, which you have so wickedly and inhumanly violated." This address being closed, the unhappy victims were suspended from the branches of the same tree upon which the French had been hanged by Menendez; and, in imitation of the Spanish inscription, "*Not as Frenchmen, but as Lutherans,*" the Chevalier de Gourgues put up the following, engraved in a tablet of pine with a hot iron, "*Not as Spaniards or Mariners, but as Traitors, Robbers, and Murderers.*" \*

The great purpose of the expedition being thus accomplished, Captain Gourgues resolved to destroy the forts, for it was no part of his design to found a colony or to remain in the country; and indeed he well knew that the Spaniards from St. Augustine or Havana would soon return upon him the severest retaliation. Moreover, if the King of France should ever again take possession of Florida, it would be easier to construct forts anew, than to take these from the enemy. He soon brought the Indians to his views, and convinced them that their interest and safety required

---

\* *La Reprinse de la Floride*; Ternaux's *Recueil*, p. 352.

the destruction of these strongholds, which the Spaniards would again occupy, and renew their former hostilities in revenge of the part which the Indians had taken against them. The chiefs summoned their dependants, who engaged in the work with such alacrity, that in one day Fort St. Matheo was levelled with the ground. The two smaller forts were demolished in the same manner.

The Captain assembled all his men at the first fort, at which he had left a guard ; and the thirty Spanish prisoners detained there were hanged, one of them confessing that he had hung five Frenchmen with his own hand, and saying in his last moments that God was just, and had brought upon him the punishment due to his crimes.

The last act being now finished, Captain Gourgues prepared to return to his vessels at the River Somme. He placed the barges, containing the artillery taken from the forts, under the command of Captain Cazenove, and went back himself by land, with eighty soldiers and forty mariners, all completely armed ; for he deemed it prudent not to put too much confidence in the savages. By no act of theirs, however, did they afford any occasion for distrust. On the contrary, they met him everywhere on the way, calling him their liberator, and bringing fish and other provisions to the soldiers ; and we are told,

with a slight tincture of national vanity, that a venerable old woman declared she should now die content, since she had lived to see the French once more in Florida.

When the commander arrived at the Somme, he found that Captain Bourdelais had been attentive to his charge, had calked the vessels, replenished the water-casks, and made every preparation for proceeding immediately to sea. It only remained to take leave of their allies, who had in all points been faithful to their promises, and rendered an assistance absolutely essential to the success of the enterprise. The young warrior Olotoraca, in particular, is applauded, not only for his scrupulous fidelity, but as having performed remarkable feats of valor. Captain Gourgues took care to impress upon the minds of the savages the power and glory of his King, and to cheer them with the idea, that he would send over a force sufficient for their protection and defence against all their enemies; and intimated that he should himself return at the end of twelve moons, and bring them abundance of mirrors, knives, and hatchets. In short, the simple natives expressed themselves much delighted with these fair and smooth words, and said they should go home and renew their joy by dancing with their wives.

The men were next called together to per-

form an act of devotion; to render thanks to the Supreme Being for the victory he had given them, and implore his guidance and protection in their voyage to their native country. Captain Gourgues recounted the many instances in which they had been rescued from impending dangers by a special providence. "Nor is it to our own strength," he said, in addressing his followers, "that we are indebted for our victory, but to God alone. Let us thank him, and forever cherish in our hearts the remembrance of the blessings he has bestowed upon us. Let us beseech him to continue his favor towards us, and preserve us from every danger. Let us implore him so to dispose the hearts of men, that the hazards to which we have been exposed, and the sufferings we have endured, may find favor in the sight of our King and of the whole French nation, since we have had no other object than the service of the King and the honor of our country."

At length the anchors were raised, and the three vessels set sail from the coast of Florida on the 3d of May. For many days the wind was fair, and the voyage prosperous, although the provisions were short. Captain Gourgues had the good fortune to fall in with a vessel, five hundred leagues from France, commanded by one of his friends, who furnished him with

a supply of biscuit. He arrived at Rochelle on the 6th of June, after a voyage of thirty-four days, and an absence from France of nine months and a half. The other vessel, of the larger size, commanded by Captain Deux, was separated from him near the Bermuda Isles, and did not reach France till a month later. The smallest vessel was lost, with eight men on board. Several of the volunteers, gentlemen of rank and character, and also some of the soldiers, were killed in the attacks on the forts.

He remained a few days at Rochelle, where he was entertained with every mark of honor, courtesy, and kindness by the citizens. He then sailed to Bourdeaux, and set off immediately on a visit to M. de Montluc, to render an account of his voyage. He afterwards ascertained that the Spaniards had received intelligence of his doings in Florida, and of his arrival at Rochelle, in time to despatch vessels to intercept him. They arrived in the offing of that port the very day he sailed, and pursued him as far as Blaye; but he was already safe in the Garonne, on his way to Bourdeaux.

Some writers have approved and defended the conduct of the Chevalier de Gourgues in this expedition, as consistent with justice and the laws of nations; and no doubt the barbarous codes of war, as they have come down to us from



ancient times, and numerous examples in history, might afford a semblance of justification. To inflict death on one person, however, for the crimes of another, or, in other words, to punish the innocent for the guilty, is abhorrent to every principle of Christianity, and to the best feelings of the human heart. An author of great name has laid it down as an axiom, that "the law of retaliation, strictly and properly so called, must be directly enforced upon the person of the offender himself;" yet he acknowledges, "that what is called retaliation in war frequently redounds to the ruin of those, who are in no way implicated in the blame." And he further says, that "the law of nations permits many things not allowed by the law of nature."\* Had the weight of vengeance fallen upon the head of Menendez, it might doubtless be regarded as an act of just retribution, and conformable to every law, human and divine. In whatever way the question of legal ethics may be decided, it seems but fair to ascribe to the Chevalier de Gourgues a chivalrous and high motive, although his conduct would have appeared in a much more favorable light, if he had crowned his victory with moderation and magnanimity, instead of imitating the barbarous example of the Spaniards.

---

\* Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, Lib. III. Ch. 4.

An expedition, however, planned and executed with so much address and courage, and carried through with complete success, wiping, as it did, a stain from the national honor, was well suited to captivate the minds and command the applause of the people. This reward was amply bestowed upon the avenger of the nation's wrongs, but it made poor amends for the treatment he received from higher sources. Montluc advised him to present himself at court. He met with a cool reception, and was even cautioned not to appear there, unless he would sacrifice himself to the resentment of the King of Spain, who had demanded his head, and set a price upon it. The Queen Mother and her faction also declared against him, and it was proposed to bring him to trial for undertaking his expedition without orders from the court.

Concealment was now his only safeguard. Poverty added her horrors, for he was unable to pay the debts he had contracted in fitting out his expedition. The President Marigny, of Rouen, took him to his house, where he remained for a long time concealed from the world, and receiving the bounty of his former friends. At length the tide turned. Queen Elizabeth solicited his services, and made flattering overtures; but his own King had by this time shown some symptoms of returning regard, charmed as he

is said to have been with his acts, though constrained by policy to discountenance them. De Gourgues declined the offers of the British Queen with acknowledgments and thanks. Soon afterwards, in 1579, Don Antonio offered him the command of his navy in a war he was about to wage against King Philip, in order to sustain his right to the crown of Portugal, which that monarch had seized. This proposal he embraced with joy. While on his way to join the Portuguese Prince, he was arrested at Tours by a disease, of which he died; "universally regretted," says Charlevoix, "and with the reputation of one of the most brave and accomplished captains of his age, equally capable of commanding a fleet at sea and an army on land."

Thus ended the first attempts of the French to establish a colony in North America, several years before the English had set foot on the soil, and nearly half a century before they had formed a permanent settlement. It would be idle to speculate on the results, if these attempts had succeeded, and the country, or a large part of it on the Atlantic coast, had fallen under the sway of that nation; but it is obvious that such an event would have produced a commanding influence in shaping and directing the destiny of this great continent.

## APPENDIX.

*Account of the Books relating to the Attempts of the French to found a Colony in Florida.*

SEVERAL of these books have become extremely rare. A brief notice of them may enable such persons, as take an interest in the subject, to obtain a more complete historical knowledge of the events, than could be communicated in the preceding memoir.

1. "The whole and true Discoverye of Terra Florida, (Englished The Florishing Land,) conteyn-  
ing as well the wonderful straunge Natures and Man-  
ers of the People, with the merveyulous Commodities  
and Treasures of the Country; as also the pleasaunt  
Portes and Havens, and Wayes thereunto never found  
out before the last year, 1562. Written in French,  
by Captain Ribauld, the fyrst that whollye discovered  
the same; and now newly set forthe in Englishe, the  
XXX of May, 1563. Prynted at London, by Rou-  
land Hall, for Thomas Hacket." This is a small  
octavo volume of forty-two pages. It consists of a  
Report made by Ribault to the Admiral Coligni,  
immediately after his return from his first voyage to  
Florida. The English translation was published in  
London about ten months after the return of Ribault.

The same was reprinted by Hakluyt, in his little volume in black letter, entitled, *Divers Voyages touching the Discoverie of America*; London, 1582. The following title is prefixed; "The true and last Discoverie of Florida, made by Captain John Ribault, in the yeere 1562; dedicated to a great Nobleman in Fraunce; and translated into Englishe by one Thomas Hackit." It is not contained in Hakluyt's large work. The great nobleman here mentioned was the Admiral Coligni. I cannot find that this tract was ever published in French, and it was probably translated from a manuscript copy. The style of the translation is awkward and crude, but the matter is valuable, embracing many particulars not to be found in any other account; and it possesses a peculiar interest, as being all that is known to have come from the pen of Ribault.

2. "Discours de l'Histoire de la Floride, contenant la Trahison des Espagnols contre les Subiets du Roy, en l'an mil cinq cens soixante-cinq. Rédigé au Vray par ceux qui en sont restéz; Chose autant lamentable à ouïr qu'elle a esté proditoirement et cruellement exécutée par les dits Espagnols contre l'autorité du Roy nostre Sire, à la Perte et Domage de tout ce Royaume. A Dieppe, 1566." In a letter to a friend, dated at Dieppe, May 22d, 1566, which forms the preface or dedication, the author signs his name N. le Challeux. He was a carpenter of Dieppe, one of the companions of Laudonnière in the second voyage. He describes what he saw. At least three editions were printed the same year; one of them at Lyons, with the following title; *Histoire*

*Mémorable du dernier Voyage aux Indes, Lieu appelé la Floride, fait par le Capitaine Jean Ribaut, et entrepris par la Commandement du Roy, en l'an M. D. LXV.* This edition is reprinted in Ternaux's *Recueil de Pièces sur la Floride; Paris, 1841.* The author gives a plain and apparently honest narrative of what came under his observation. He was one of those who escaped with Laudonnière from the terrible massacre at Fort Caroline. Speaking of his sufferings on that occasion, of which he draws a vivid picture, he expresses astonishment that he was enabled to endure them, "an old man as he was, and very corpulent." At another time he represents himself as more than sixty years of age.

The carpenter of Dieppe had a philosophical and poetical turn, as well as a spirit of enterprise; and his narrative also abounds with prayers and religious reflections. In his dedicatory epistle, he falls into a strain of moralizing, in apparent allusion to his own case. "What a dangerous thing it is," he says, "not to be content with our vocation! We are carried away by our vain desires, run counter to the command of God, and strive after things not necessary. Why should an artisan desert his shop, the father of a family his dear wife and children, his country, his real and proper calling, and be led astray by strange and false illusions, grasping at shadows, and suffering himself to be duped by his blind fancies?" To illustrate the folly of such a caprice, he cites Homer, Aristotle, Horace, Pliny, and other sages of antiquity. The first edition is a small octavo of fifty-six pages. At the beginning are verses

descriptive of his condition on his return from Florida, oppressed with poverty, and having brought nothing with him but "a beautiful white staff in his hand." The volume closes with another effusion of his muse, expressing the joy he felt at again seeing his beloved city of Dieppe. If these specimens afford but humble proofs of his poetical gifts, they at least show that his philosophy and experience produced good humor, and a cheerful submission to the will of Providence.

Camus mentions a volume published at Antwerp, by Levinus Apollonius, in 1568, entitled *De Navigatione Gallorum in Terram Floridam*; probably a translation or abridgment of the narratives of Ribault and Challeux, as no other original accounts, except a short letter from a French soldier in Florida, had been published at that date.

3. "L'Histoire Notable de la Floride, située es Indes Occidentales, contenant les trois Voyages faits en icelle par certains Capitaines et Pilotes François, descrits par le Capitaine Laudonnière, qui y a commandé l'Espace d'un an trois Moys; à laquelle a esté adiousté un quatriesme Voyage fait par le Capitaine Gourgues. Mise en Lumière par M. BASANIER, Gentilhomme François, Mathematicien. A Paris. M. D. LXXXVI." This volume contains an account of the first three voyages to Florida, written by Laudonnière, and a brief notice of the fourth voyage by another hand. In a dedication to Sir Walter Raleigh, the editor says of the work, "It having been suppressed and forgotten for nearly

twenty years, I have, with the diligence of Mr. Hakluyt, a gentleman well versed in geographical history and in various languages and sciences, disinterred it, as it were, from the tomb, where it has lain so long in useless repose, and brought it before the world." No explanation is given of the cause of its having been kept from publication, or of the manner in which the manuscript fell into his hands. The dedication is dated at Paris, March 1st, 1586. It is followed by short poetical and flattering addresses in Latin to Sir Walter Raleigh, one of them by Basanier himself; and an anagram in French from the same hand. Hakluyt contributed his share, in eight Latin lines *In laudem eorum qui novas orbis partes detexerunt*. Basanier assures the reader, that he printed the manuscript exactly as he found it, without amendment or addition. Besides the dedication, and poetical tribute to Raleigh, he wrote a preface.

The whole of this work, as translated by Hakluyt, is contained in the third volume of his great *Collection of Voyages*, under the title, "A Notable Historie concerning foure Voyages made by certaine French Captaines into Florida," published fourteen years later than the original. Hakluyt suppresses Martin Basanier's dedication, and substitutes one of his own, addressed to the same great personage, telling him, "No marvaile though it were welcome unto you, and that you liked of the translation thereof, since no history hitherto set forth hath more affinitie, resemblance, or conformitie with yours of Virginia, than



this of Florida." The translation is close and rigid, often too much so for elegance, and appears to have been executed with scrupulous fidelity.

4. "Coppie d'une Lettre venant de la Floride envoyée à Rouen, et depuis au Seigneur D'Eueron ; ensemble le Plan et Portraict du Fort que les François y ont faict. A Paris. 1565." Reprinted in Ternaux's *Recueil*, making thirteen pages. It was written in Florida, apparently by a soldier or volunteer, who accompanied Laudonnière in the second voyage. It gives a brief description of the voyage, and of the building of Fort Caroline at the River May. In fact, it was written while the fort was in progress, probably in the month of July, 1565, and was sent to France by the first vessel that returned with despatches from Laudonnière.

5. "Brevis Narratio eorum quæ in Florida, Americæ Provincia, Gallis acciderunt, secunda in illam Navigatione, Duce Renato de Laudonnière Classis Præfecto; Anno M. D. LXIII. Auctore Iacobo le Moyne, cui Cognomen de Morgues, Laudonnie-rum in ea Navigatione sequuto. Francoforti ad Mœ-num. Anno M. D. XCI." Constituting the second part of Theodore De Bry's *Great Voyages*. The author, Le Moyne de Morgues, was a painter of Dieppe, whom Laudonnière had engaged in the expedition for the purpose of taking drawings of remarkable objects. He was one of the few that escaped from the massacre at Fort Caroline. He returned with Laudonnière, landed in England, and remained there. De Bry became acquainted with him in London, in the year 1587, saw his drawings,

and learned from him many particulars concerning what he had seen and experienced in Florida. Meantime he wrote an account of the voyage, and of the events which came under his observation. He died soon afterwards, and De Bry purchased of his widow the manuscript and his original drawings. The latter, forty-two in number, besides a map of Florida, were engraved by De Bry and his sons, and published in the volume of which the title is given above. They must have been sketched from recollection; for Le Moyne could not have saved anything at the time of his escape from the fort. Some of them also are mere pictures of the imagination. They are designed chiefly to illustrate the modes of life, manners, ceremonies, and dress of the natives. Each plate is accompanied by a description; and, taken together, these descriptions convey much interesting knowledge respecting the operations of the French in Florida.

Le Moyne's narrative was composed in French, and translated into Latin by another hand for De Bry's work. It is brief, but well written. To assist his recollection, he had the advantage of what had been written by Challeux and Laudonnière. In fact, he refers to the former, and quotes several pages from the latter with due acknowledgment. His account is preceded by a general description of the discoveries in Florida, and of the events that occurred there under the Spaniards before the attempts of the French to found a colony.

6. "De Gallorum Expeditione in Floridam, et Clade ab Hispanis non minus iniustè quam imma-

niter ipsis illata, Anno M. D. LXV. Brevis Historia." Published by Vignon, at Geneva, 1578, at the end of Urbain Chauveton's Latin translation of Benzoni's *Historia del Mondo Nuovo*. The translator puts his name into the Latin dress of Urbanus Calveton. In his prefatory remarks, he says that he had been chiefly induced to add this short history to Benzoni's work, in consequence of the Spaniards, at the time he wrote, perpetrating more atrocious acts of cruelty in the Netherlands, than they had ever committed upon the savages. Except the first chapter, and two paragraphs at the end, he professes to translate from Challeux, including, in fact, the whole of that writer's account. The narratives of Laudonnière and Le Moyne had not yet appeared. Chauveton's *Brevis Historia* is likewise contained in the Sixth Part of De Bry's Collection, and is appended in French to his French translation of Benzoni, published the year after the Latin.

7. "Une Requête au Roy, faite en forme de Complainte par les Femmes veufves, petits Enfans orphelins, et autres leurs Amis, Parents, et Alliez de ceux qui ont été cruellement envahis par les Espagnols en la France Antharctique dite la Floride." A curious and important document, being a petition to Charles the Ninth from the widows, children, and other relatives of those who had been killed by the Spaniards in Florida. It relates chiefly to Ribault's third voyage, and the massacre of himself and his companions; and coming from such a source, in the form of a petition to the King, it may probably be regarded as an authentic rec-

ord of facts. It is dated the 22d of May, 1566, and is printed in one of the editions of Challeux's *Discours*, and also at the end of Chauveton's French translation of Benzoni, published at Geneva, 1579. There are two Latin translations, one by Chauveton, appended to his *Brevis Historia*, and also to the Sixth Part of De Bry; the other, by an unknown hand, contained in the Second Part. These are free translations, but they accord in the essential points.

8. "Mémoire de l'heureux Résultat et du bon Voyage que Dieu notre Seigneur a bien voulu accorder à la Flotte, qui partit de la Ville de Cadiz pour se rendre à la Côte et dans la Province de la Floride, et dont était Général l'illustre Seigneur Pero Menendez de Abiles. Par Franciso Lopez de Mendoza, Chapelain de l'Expedition;" published in Ternaux's *Recueil*, Paris, 1841. Here we have the Spanish account of the voyage of Menendez, the capture of Fort Caroline, the massacre of the French under Ribault and Laudonnière, and the first establishment of St. Augustine. It is a translation by M. Ternaux of an original Spanish manuscript, which he says has never been published in that language, and is a valuable addition to the materials before in print. The author writes from personal observation. He shows himself in almost every page a fanatic in religion, and seems to regard the atrocities of his countrymen as so many acts of divine judgment upon the perverse and deluded heretics; bringing to the reader's notice divers miracles, performed, as he believes, for the special purpose of aiding so pious a work.

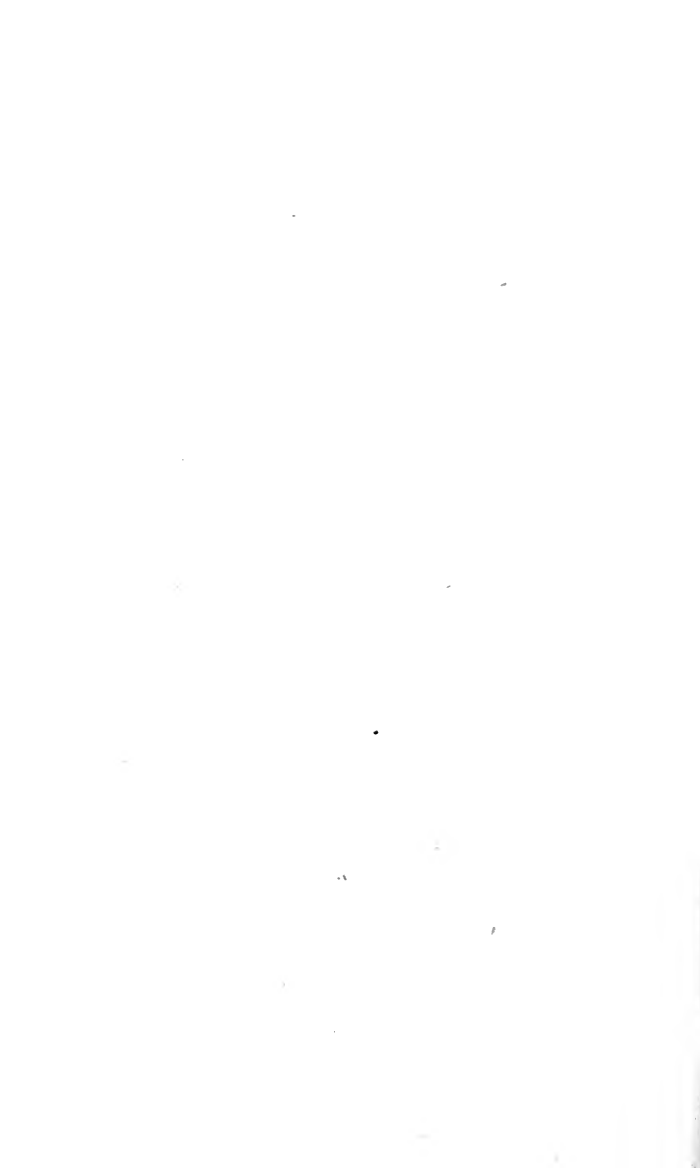
9. "Ensayo Chronologico para la Historia General de la Florida. Escrito por Don Gabriel de Cardenas z Cano. Madrid, 1723." This name is an anagram for Andres Gonzales Barcia, who was the real author of the work; a ponderous folio, containing a complete history of Florida, in chronological order, from the time of its first discovery, in 1512, to the year 1722. A detailed account is given of the proceedings of the French in their attempts to establish a colony in Florida; and a long memoir is inserted entire, written by Dr. Solis de las Meras, an eye-witness, concerning the massacre of Ribault and his companions, which differs in some respects from the French statements, but exhibits the cruelty of the scene in a relief scarcely less bold or shocking. Barcia is in all points an apologist for his countrymen, and an implacable enemy to the heretics, the unfortunate Huguenots, who hoped to find an asylum from persecution in the forests of the New World. His history is not confined to Florida, properly so called, but includes the discoveries of Marquette, La Salle, Tonty, and others, in the great valley of the Mississippi. This work was severely criticised by Salazar, in a tract entitled, *Crisis del Ensayo a la Historia de la Florida*, published in 1725. It should be consulted by those, who would understand the true merits of the *Ensayo*. Mr. Rich bestows great praise on Barcia for the pains he took to collect and republish the best works on American history, many of which had become extremely rare.

10. "La Reprinse de la Floride par le Cappitaine

Gourgue;" published in Ternaux's *Recueil*, 1841. This is the first publication of a manuscript contained in the Royal Library of Paris, being an account of the fourth voyage to Florida, under the command of the Chevalier de Gourgues. It appears to have been the original from which all the descriptions of that voyage have been taken. The brief account in Basanier's *Histoire Notable*, translated by Hakluyt, is evidently an abridgment of this manuscript; and the tract, *De Quarta Gallorum in Floridam Navigatione sub Gourguesco*, in the Second Part of De Bry, is a translation from Basanier. Internal evidence shows, that the author was either a companion of De Gourgues, or that he obtained his facts from some of the officers who were in the expedition. Charlevoix, in the Second Book of his *Nouvelle France*, mentions another manuscript relation of the same voyage, in possession of the family of De Gourgues; but this has never been published.

The above are believed to be all the original sources, which relate to the subject. Lescarbot, Charlevoix, De Thou, Mezeray, and other historians, draw from these sources. Indeed, nearly all of them copy from Basanier only. His work is followed closely by Lescarbot, who frequently transcribes the language. Charlevoix ranges more widely, takes some facts from Le Moyne, and selects copiously from Barcia's *Ensayo*; but even this writer appears not to have consulted Ribault's official report, or the interesting narrative of the honest carpenter of Dieppe.

L I F E  
OF  
SEBASTIAN RALE,  
MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS;  
BY  
CONVERS FRANCIS, D. D.





## PREFACE.

---

THE life of one who gives his whole soul to the work of a Christian mission, whether his labors be wisely conducted or not, will naturally awaken more or less of religious interest. But in some cases the religious interest is not all. The missionary may fall upon times or circumstances, which bring his function into close connection with the disputes or the measures of conflicting communities. Then his name and doings gather another kind of importance, by passing into the current of general history.

Such was the case of SEBASTIAN RALE, the Catholic and Jesuit, who spent a laborious life, and met a tragical death amidst the ancient hostilities, in Northern America, between the French and English colonies in connection with the Indians. His name, with some general notion of his agency, is familiar to those who have looked into that portion of New England history; and occasionally it has appeared in our literature of poetry and fiction. A few brief notices of his life and fate in the wilderness have been

given. Of these, the most satisfactory is that published, twenty-six years ago, in the eighth volume of the Second Series of the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, by the late Reverend Doctor Harris, of Dorchester, whose valuable historical labors, as well as his many years of pious faithfulness in a higher service, have justly secured for his memory the grateful respect of our community. But as his Memoir of Rale fills but eight pages, it supplies, of course, only the outline of a notice. I am not aware that any account, adequate to the claims of the subject, has as yet appeared.

In preparing the following biography, besides the obvious sources of information furnished by our American histories and documents, by the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, and by Charlevoix, it will be seen, in the course of the narrative, that I have availed myself of some which are rare, and of others which have never appeared in print; such as the manuscript book of Tutor Flynt, and the Journal of the Reverend Joseph Baxter. The ancient documents at the State House, in Boston, I have diligently examined in connection with my subject; and though my search was not always rewarded as I could wish, they have furnished me with valuable aid. It was hoped that something of importance might be gleaned from French state papers in Paris;

and inquiries for that purpose wère instituted, but in vain.

I have only to add, that it has been my endeavor to present a faithful and impartial account of a man, to whose name is attached not a little of extraordinary and even romantic interest. The strong passions, both of friends and foes, once excited by his character and agency, may be supposed to have sunk under the tide of time. His virtues and his faults, his labors and his influence, whether for good or evil, it may be difficult fairly to estimate ; but, like those of every public man, they claim the calm justice of history.



# SEBASTIAN RALE.

---

## CHAPTER I.

*Rale's Birth and Education. — His Mission to the French Possessions in America. — Residence among the Abnakis. — Labor in learning their Language. — Notice of their Habits of Life.*

THE impression left by the zeal of the Jesuits upon the movements of the modern world presents an historical study of deep interest. Their virtues and their faults, the good and the evil of their labors, await a more dispassionate estimate than they have yet received. Of unwearied, fearless energy, of self-forgetting devotedness to the interests of their order and their church, whether in the spirit of crafty policy or of pious earnestness, they have afforded an example, which no one can regard without wonder. In the countries of the Old World, the power of their scholars, and their master-spirits, reached through the departments of literary and scientific education, of religion, of

government, of social life. It flowed into the remotest parts of the globe by means of their stupendous missionary enterprises. From the north to the south, from the east to the west, they served or vexed the nations. In one form or another, they put their girdle round the earth. The fervor of religious zeal, the subtlety of astute contrivance, and the urbanity of winning manners, opened a way for them wherever they turned their steps.

The memory of a remarkable man of this order, SEBASTIAN RALE,\* connects itself with an interesting portion of the early history of our country. By the people of New England, at that time, he was generally represented and detested as a cunning, unprincipled emissary of France and Papacy; by his own church and nation he was held in affectionate reverence, as a disinterested, saintly martyr. The one party considered

---

\* The orthography of his name appears to be singularly unsettled and various. In the designation of his letters among the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, it is written *Rasles*. In Charlevoix, we find it *Rasle*. Dr. Belknap, and most of our earlier historians, have spelt it *Ralle*. The missionary himself, in a letter to Captain Moody, of the 18th of Nov. 1712, signs his name *Seb. Rale*; and the Rev. Mr. Baxter, in a Latin letter to him, addresses it *Reverendo Domino Sebastiano Rale*. I believe the orthography I have given above is now most generally adopted. Mr. Pickering indicates the sound of the word by an accent on the first vowel, *Râle*.

his tragical fate as the just retribution of his mischievous and criminal agency ; the other regarded it with deep indignation, as the vengeance inflicted by ruthless passion upon a devoted servant of the cross. The gusty impulses of national and religious feeling were too strong, on both sides, to allow the minds of the hostile parties to settle into a just judgment.

Sebastian Rale was a Frenchman, born, in 1657 or 1658, of a respectable family in the province of Franche-Comté. Of that part of his life, which passed before he left his native country, I have sought in vain for information. He doubtless received his education at a Jesuit college, under the skilful, thorough system of instruction which prevailed in those institutions. His reputation as a scholar proves that his opportunities for learning had not been wasted. The Jesuits displayed remarkable adroitness in discovering the peculiar gifts or dispositions of their pupils, and in employing these where they would turn to the best account. They early found, we may believe, in young Rale, that spirit of sagacious firmness and of fearless self-sacrifice, which would fit him for the toil and peril of laboring for the church in a foreign wilderness.

At the age of thirty-two, he received the charge of a mission to the Indians connected with the French possessions in North America.

In pursuance of this trust, he embarked at Rochelle on the 23d of July, 1689, and arrived at Quebec on the 13th of the following October. His first station was among the Abnakis,\* that is, "Men of the East," a name once applied in general to the Indians on the eastern coast of this continent, but afterwards restricted to the tribes inhabiting a part of Canada, Nova Scotia, and the adjoining territory of the present state of Maine. These people had a village, of about two hundred inhabitants, three leagues from Quebec, where Ralé fixed his residence. Of his sojourn at this place he has given a lively account in a letter addressed to his brother in 1723, which presents a review of his missionary life and labors.†

This little community in the wilderness had before been brought within the Christian fold. So far as his religious work was concerned, therefore, Ralé had only to maintain and strengthen what was already begun. Among these people he passed, as he says, his missionary apprentice-

---

\* Or, as it is sometimes written, the *Abenakis*.

† *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses, écrites des Missions Etrangères*, Tom. XXIII. p. 198. These *Lettres*, (in 28 vols. 12mo., the first two including two vols. in one,) containing a large mass of curious reports and observations of the Jesuit missionaries in diverse parts of the world, furnish some of the most important of the original authorities for several portions of this memoir.



ship, and found time to prepare himself for the further efforts which other stations might require. His chief occupation was the study of their language, an employment which, as may easily be supposed, he found encumbered with no light difficulties. The whole genius and structure of the speech differed much from those, with which he had been hitherto acquainted; and the savages, of course, were but poorly qualified to be his instructors. On his arrival at Quebec, before coming to this place, he had immediately turned his attention to the task of mastering the Indian tongue. But he soon found that to study the terms and their meaning, and thus to acquire a stock of words and phrases, would be of little avail. It was necessary to become acquainted with the idiomatic turns and arrangements of expression, which could be learned only by familiar intercourse with the natives, day by day. His present situation furnished him with the opportunity he needed for this purpose.

Rale spent a part of every day in the wigwams of the Indians, in order to catch from their lips the peculiarities of their speech. It required the closest attention to distinguish the combinations of sound, and to perceive the meaning they were intended to convey. Not seldom he drew upon himself the wild laugh of the Indians, by the imperfect utterance arising from his inability to

manage some of their deep guttural sounds. Five months of patient perseverance enabled him to overcome the chief difficulties of the task, and so far to possess himself of the vocabulary and construction of the language, that he composed for his neophytes a catechism of instruction in the principles and mysteries of his church. He speaks also, at this time, of making a dictionary, the beginning of the valuable work, which I shall have occasion to notice in a subsequent part of this memoir.

The Indians, *Rale* observes, had in their language several sounds which were uttered only from the throat, without any motion of the lips.\* He was struck with what he thought to be the lively beauty and the dramatic energy of some of the forms of Indian speech. Illustrating this by an example, he says to his correspondent, "If I

---

\* The sound corresponding to the French *ou* was of this number, which, by way of distinction, he denoted by the Greek character *σ* in writing. The apostle Eliot "used a character composed of two *o*'s closely united, thus (*oo*), resembling the figure 8 laid horizontally." But Mr. Pickering thinks that the simple *u* or *w* would always supply its place, and would render unnecessary both this character and that used by *Rale*, which occurs throughout his MS. dictionary. See Mr. Pickering's very valuable paper, *On the Adoption of a uniform Orthography for the Indian Languages of North America*, in *Memoirs of the American Academy*, Vol. IV. p. 330.

should ask *you* for what purpose you were created by God, you would reply, ‘That I might honor, love, and serve him, and so be prepared for the glory of eternity;’ but if I should put the same question to one of these savages, he would answer, ‘Thus thought the Great Spirit concerning us; Let them know me, let them love me, let them honor and obey me, that then I may cause them to enter into my glorious happiness.’”

Rale considered the language of the Hurons as the mother tongue of the Indian dialects, and the most majestic and difficult of their languages. A knowledge of this, he affirms, would enable any one in less than three months to make himself intelligible to all the five nations of the Iroquois, meaning by these the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Senecas, and Cayugas.\* Father

---

\* To these “Five Nations” the Tuscaroras were afterwards added, and then they were sometimes styled the “Six Nations.” An interesting account of the confederated republic of these tribes, in which each tribe had its independent *fire* for deliberation on its own affairs, while there was at Onondaga a large *common fire* at which the great council of the whole confederacy met, may be found in Loskiel’s *Geschichte der Mission der evangelischen Brüder*, &c. Th. I. Abs. 10; (History of the Mission of the United Brethren, translated by La Trobe, Part I. Ch. 10.) See also Gov. Clinton’s *Discourse before the N. Y. Hist. Soc.* in the second volume of the Society’s *Collections*. Also, Colden’s *History of the Five Nations*.

Chaumont, who had lived fifty years among the Hurons, composed a very useful grammar of their tongue, which the philologists of our day would rejoice to find. Rale illustrates the differences among the dialects of three or four of the tribes, by giving in each a stanza translated from a Hymn of the Holy Sacrament.\*

His description of the personal appearance of the Indian is that of "a large man, strong, active, of a swarthy complexion, beardless, and with teeth whiter than ivory." He furnishes an account, somewhat in detail, of their wigwams, their dress, their ornaments of beads and shells, and some of their general customs. These are generally such as are now familiar to most readers. Particular notice is taken of the Indian snow-shoes, which, he says, were more than two feet long, and a foot and a half wide. They facilitated greatly the business of hunting, over the deep snows, the larger animals, whose skins the natives exchanged with the French and English for kettles, guns, clothing, and knives. Rale at first thought it impossible for him to walk with such apparently cumbrous appendages to the feet. But he found, upon trial, that he could soon use them with so much dexterity as to surprise the Indians, who could hardly be persuaded that he had not worn them before.

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. p. 215.

In their light canoes, constructed, as he says, of bark not thicker than a crown, these wild men navigated the largest lakes and the most dangerous rivers. On these expeditions, their priest was frequently their companion. Once, on the St. Lawrence, they found themselves surrounded by large masses of ice, among which their slender canoe was so sadly bruised and torn, that the Indians cried out in the greatest alarm, as if it were all over with them. They succeeded, however, in the effort to leap on one of the pieces of ice, drawing after them their canoe, in which they embarked till they encountered another mass of ice, and passing thus from one fragment to another, till they reached the bank of the river, thoroughly drenched and half frozen.

Rale confesses, that for some time he found great difficulty in overcoming the disgust he felt at taking his meals with the Indians. They would boil a medley of materials in their kettle, serve up the food thus rudely prepared in porringers of bark, and hand it about to all present. It may easily be supposed, that a man recently from the tables of one of the most refined nations in Europe would feel but little inclination for such a repast. "What I saw," he says, "certainly did not whet my appetite. The Indians took notice of my repugnance to their viands, and said, 'Why do you not eat?' I replied, that I was not used

to eating my food thus, without any bread. ‘You must overcome your scruples,’ said they ; ‘and is this so hard for a father who understands prayer \* perfectly ? We, on our part, have difficulties to get over, in order to have faith in what we cannot see.’ Then I could hesitate no longer ; it became necessary to accommodate myself to their manners and usages, that I might win their confidence, and gather them into the fold of Christ.”

Rale speaks of their tenderness of affection towards their children, and admires the skill, which boys of ten or twelve years showed in the use of the bow. He takes notice of their cultivation of Indian corn, which they called *skamgnar*.

---

\* It will be remembered that the natives used the word *prayer* as equivalent to *religion* or *Christianity*.

## CHAPTER II.

*Rale's Mission among the Illinois Indians. — His Stay at Mackinac, and Notes concerning the Indians there. — Arrival at Illinois River. — A Feast, and Eloquence of the Natives. — Their Habits. — Fruits of the Missionary's Labors.*

A NEW and far distant scene of labor now awaits our devoted missionary. He is to be numbered with that memorable company of Jesuit priests, whom religious zeal inspired to traverse the wilds of our "mighty west" in the seventeenth century, and on the shores of its vast rivers and lakes to gather the red men around the sign of the cross. The history of our continent has few pages of more sacred and romantic interest, than those which record the toils, the bravery, the sufferings of these men. Their story, which for a long time had been comparatively unknown or neglected, has recently awakened the interest it deserves. Whatever judgment may be passed upon the faith of their Church, or the character of their Order, all must feel that their fearless devotedness, their severe labors, their meek but heroic self-sacrifice, have thrown a peculiar charm over the early history of a region, in which the

restless spirit of American enterprise is going forth to such magnificent results.

Rale had been two years among the Abnakis, when he was recalled, by his superiors, to take charge of a station among the Illinois Indians, which had been vacated by the death of their missionary. He cheerfully undertook the perilous trust, and in 1691 or 1692 followed into the western wilderness the steps of Brabeuf, Daniel, Maret, Alloüez, Dablon, and Marquette. He repaired to Quebec, where he spent three months in studying the language of the Algonquins. About the middle of August, he departed on his cheerless journey to the region of Illinois River. The light of faith went with him, and brightened his path through eight hundred leagues of a wilderness inhabited by savages. "I had to traverse," says he, "immense lakes, on which storms are as common as on the ocean;" and this in a frail canoe, which was also his only conveyance through the dangerous rapids of the rivers. Hunger frequently pressed hard upon him and his companions. When other resources failed, they were obliged to satisfy their cravings with a vegetable which the French called *tripe de roche*.\* "It resembled," says Rale, "the leaves of

---

\* The Indian name was *Kengnessanack*, or, as it is written in Rale's Dictionary, *Kānghéssanak*. The *tripe de roche*, or



the *chervil*\* in shape, though not so large." When he reached Mackinac, between the Lakes Huron and Michigan, the season was too far advanced to permit him to proceed further at that time. He accordingly sojourned there during the severity of the winter, and had the pleasure of finding two brother missionaries as companions.

The time of this delay was not a time of idleness. He took careful note of the life and usages of the wild men of the woods. One tribe, of whom his letter furnishes some curious particulars, professed to be derived from three families, each of which consisted of five hundred persons. These families traced their origin severally to certain animals, which they seem to have regarded as a sort of gods. One was called the family of the Great Hare; and among them existed a tradition bearing, in some respects, no

---

rock-tripe, is one of the Lichenes known in botany as the *Umbilicaria Muhlenbergii*. It was much used as an article of food by the northern Indians of America. Franklin, in his "Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea," speaks of the nutritious qualities of this plant. See an account of it in that fine contribution to botanical science, for which we are indebted to one of our most philosophical naturalists, *An Enumeration of North American Lichenes*, by Edward Tuckerman, LL. B. p. 42.

\* The *scandix cerefolium* of botanists, an annual in the south of Europe, the leaves of which have a slightly aromatic taste, and are used in soups and salads.

little resemblance to the biblical account of the deluge. It was enjoined as a duty upon these to burn the bodies of their dead, and cast the ashes into the air, that the departed might rise the more easily towards heaven. The punishment for the neglect of this duty would be, that the earth should be covered with snow, and the lakes and rivers with ice, so long, that they would all perish with hunger; a threat which, as they believed, on one occasion, came near to being fulfilled.

Another family was derived from the Great Carp, whose eggs, deposited on the bank of a river, the sun's rays warmed into life, and produced a woman, from whom they descended. The third was the family of the Bear, their great ancestor. These, when they killed a bear, celebrated him in a feast made of his own flesh, and addressed him, as if his spirit were present, as follows; "We beg you not to think ill of us because we have killed you; you are a bear of sense; you see that our children are suffering with hunger; they love you; they would take you into their bodies; and is it not glorious to be eaten by the children of the chief?" One might suspect that, like some of the ancient nations, they seasoned their reverence for their god with a dash of humor.

Among the two last mentioned families, when a chief died, they prepared a vast coffin, in which,

with the body dressed in his finest garments, they enclosed his blanket, his gun with a stock of powder and balls, his bow and arrows, his kettle and dish with provisions, his pipe, his box, his glass, his neck-ornaments, and all the presents which custom required to be made to the dead. With these preparations, they supposed his journey to the other world would be more successful, and the great chiefs of the nation, who had gone before, would give him a better reception, and conduct him to the abodes of the happy.

The Indian worship of the *Manitou* peculiarly arrested the attention of Rale. Something which might be called a divinity was supposed to reside in the beasts of the forest. There was one Grand Manitou of all the animals, that walk on the earth or fly in the air. To him belonged the supremacy over the others; and to him the Indians, when about to engage in a hunting expedition, presented offerings of tobacco, powder, and well dressed skins, which they fixed on the end of a pole, and raised in the air. Each tribe had its common manitou; but individuals might also have theirs. When an Indian wished to provide himself with a guardian genius in this way, his choice commonly fell upon some animal that happened to present itself in his dreams. One of that species he killed, and placed its skin, or, if it was a bird, its plumage, in the most honored part of

his cabin. He then prepared a feast to do it honor, and made a formal address to it in terms of the greatest deference. This was the act of consecration; it then became his special manitou.\*

When spring opened, Rale pursued his journey. In forty days he arrived at the Illinois River. Following its course fifty leagues, he reached an Indian village consisting of three hundred wigwams, where he received a hearty and respectful welcome. The day after his arrival, he was invited by the leading sachem to a feast of dog's flesh, which was held in high honor by the savages, and called the Festival of the Sachems. A large number of dogs was slain for the occasion. At these entertainments they were accustomed to deliberate on public matters of importance, such as making war and proposing peace. When the guests had arranged themselves around the wigwam, on the ground or on mats, the chief sachem arose, and harangued them on the business in hand. Rale, delighted and surprised with his flowing eloquence and felicitous expressions, in the zeal of admiration says to his correspondent, "I am sure, that had I taken down in writing the speech which this Indian pronounced on the spot, without premeditation, you would say that

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. pp. 220-230. See Constant, *De la Religion*, &c. Tom. I. p. 161.

the most skilful European, after much thoughtful study, could not produce a more pertinent or beautiful discourse." Perhaps the judgment of the good missionary was somewhat bewildered by the novelty of the scene and by random bursts of vivid imagery; but doubtless the rude men of the forest, speaking the language of nature under fresh and warm impulses, have sometimes reached an eloquence not easily attained by those, who use the worn and measured words of refined society.

When the speech was finished, two Indians served up the entertainment, assigning one dish to every two guests, who, after the repast, retired, taking with them whatever remained in the dish. Their custom in this respect, Rale observes, differed from that of some other tribes, among whom the guests at a feast were required to eat all that was set before them, however irksome or painful the repletion might be. If any one had not the ability to cram, which this law of the feast demanded, he would turn in his distress to some companion, whose appetite or capacity was greater than his own, and say, "My brother, have pity on me! I shall die, if you do not come to my rescue. Eat, I beg you, what remains of my portion, and I will requite you with some present."

The missionary gives many brief, but interesting, notices of Indian life at this place. It is

remarkable that the dance was an expression both of joy and grief, being used on occasions of merriment, and likewise of mourning for the death of any distinguished members of the tribe. This was regarded as an honor to the deceased person, and a consolation to his kindred. Presents were expected, and the continuance of the dance depended upon the value of the gifts distributed among the dancers. The Illinois did not bury their dead in the earth, but wrapped the bodies in skins, and attached them by the head and feet to the tops of trees.

Rale observes it was the good fortune of the Illinois to be so far removed from Quebec, that ardent spirits could not be carried into their country, as was done in other places. This drink, he adds, wherever it is used, is the greatest obstacle to the introduction of Christianity among the savages, and the cause of enormous mischief and crime. He administers but a mild rebuke to a sin against humanity as well as morality, when he says that the disorders and horrible deaths from this source should, in common justice, prevail over the lust of gain to suppress the traffic in these fatal liquors.\*

---

\* Even the Illinois, as Père Vivier, who resided among them, testifies, were not beyond the reach of this poison. Mr. Halkett (*Hist. Notes respecting the Indians of North*

Of the employments of the men and women Rale gives the same accounts, which the descriptions of Indian life have made familiar to us. He presents a lively detail of their great business of hunting. Reputation turned upon such points as we expect among the wild men of the woods. To be a good hunter was much; but to be a good warrior was more. The brave and skilful fighter was the highest form of man. Every fatigue was light, every labor easy, which would enable him to capture or scalp an enemy. The warriors counted as nothing the severe fasts, to which they were the more exposed, because, as they approached the hostile territory, they no longer ventured to hunt, lest the animals should escape, bearing in their bodies the arrows that

---

*America*, Ch. VIII.) has given many striking statements, from the early French missionaries, and others, of the incalculable evils wrought among the Indians by the spirituous liquors of *Christians*. Le Jeune, in one of his early Reports from Canada, relates an instance, in which the words of the savage might have put the civilized man to the blush; "Our interpreter," says he, "told me that the Indians belonging to a tribe, of whom one is now in prison for killing a Frenchman, reproached us extremely, saying it was the *liquor*, not the *Indian*, that committed the murder. 'Send your wine and brandy to prison,' they exclaimed; 'it is these, and not we, who do the mischief.'" Would it not be well at the present day, among ourselves, if the force of this Indian reasoning were somewhat seriously considered?

had pierced them, and so betray to their enemies the secret of their approach. It was a high honor to return to their country laden with many scalps ; but a higher to bring home living prisoners. If one of the warriors had been killed in the expedition, and his tribe were disposed to supply his place, they assigned a prisoner to his wigwam for that purpose ; and this they called resuscitating the deceased. The rest of the prisoners were generally put to death by those fierce tortures, of which many accounts of the savage man have told us more than enough. We read such accounts with horror, and comfort ourselves with the reflection that civilization has tamed the ferocity of the war-spirit. But that spirit, when the best is made of it, is nothing but the savage law of brute force. The tiger may be chained or encaged ; but he is a tiger still.

Rale speaks but briefly of the religious condition of these Illinois. He looked upon it with the eye of a missionary's faith or hope, and saw much to encourage him. He acknowledges, however, that the men, though they confessed *prayer* to be very good, and were quite delighted to have it taught to their wives and children, proved intractable subjects themselves, which he ascribes mainly to the difficulty of prevailing on them to give up polygamy, as Christianity required them to do. They attended the services of their chapel, how-



ever, with commendable readiness; but the largest and surest fruit of the missionary's labors was found, as he believed, in the baptism of great numbers of their children.\*

---

### CHAPTER III.

*Rale's Return to the Abnakis. — His Station at Norridgwock. — His Church and religious Services. — His own Habits of Living, and the constant Occupation of his Time. — Conversion of the Amalingans.*

WHEN Rale had spent two years with the Illinois Indians, he was recalled to a station among the Abnakis, who had been the first objects of his care. He has recorded with zealous delight the gratification he derived, on his journey back to Quebec, from an opportunity of administering baptism to a young Indian girl just before her death, and of thus being the instrument, as he says, "of placing her in heaven."

The mission assigned to him, on his return,

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. pp. 230-248.

was at an Indian settlement on the banks of the River Kennebec. This place he calls *Nan-rantsouack*, which Charlevoix alters to *Narant-soak*.\* The river, Rale remarks, must be named *Kinibeki* on the map, which, he adds, has induced some of the French to give the natives the designation of *Kanibals*. Here he spent the remainder of his days, and here, at the post of duty, he met at length a bloody death.

In this position of loneliness and of danger he lived, as far as we can learn, among the men of the forest as a brother, as one with them in their interests, wants, and sympathies. Whatever were his faults, he won their hearty confidence. They loved him warmly; and amidst all the violent caprice of the savage character, their affection seems never to have wavered.

The religious duties of the station held, we may believe, the uppermost place in his thoughts, though he was, doubtless, not inattentive to whatever might guard or strengthen the colonial power of France. He had a neat church, which he spared no pains to supply with such deco-

---

\* The place is called *Norridgewock* by the New England historians. This name now designates the pleasant village in the state of Maine, near which, on a beautiful bend of the river, was situated the Indian community, to whom Rale ministered. Dr. Belknap writes it *Norridgewog*.

rations or conveniences, as he could procure from his brethren at Quebec. It was so handsomely furnished with altar ornaments, sacred vessels, and the other necessary appendages, that Rale declares it would be considered very respectable even by persons accustomed to the churches of Europe. He had, as Père de la Chasse informs us,\* a good degree of skill in painting and mechanical work, of which he availed himself to supply many of these ornaments by the labor of his own hands. He lived for the object before him, as one who wished nothing better or higher. His warmest affections gathered around this little temple of the wilderness, where, amidst the loneliness of the ancient forest, the praise of God was chanted, as he believed, by sincere, though unenlightened worshippers, and the word of faith listened to by devout though uncultivated hearers. He commends with earnest expressions the piety of his converts, assuring the friend to whom he writes, that they were no longer the same men as before, and that the innocence of their lives was such as to leave but little for absolution at the confessional. Without accepting any romance of purity, which the willing faith of the missionary found or imagined among the savages, we

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. p. 341.

may readily believe that his loving and devoted labors could not fail to awaken something of the better life even in the spirits of these rude men.

As an instance of his minute interest in whatever concerned his church, may be mentioned his gratification at finding, in the wilderness, materials for candles. This appears to have been what is commonly called bayberry-wax. The berries of a species of laurel were boiled in water ; and the oily matter that floated on the surface, when skimmed off, cooled into a beautiful green wax. This, mixed with tallow or other fat, in equal quantities, made firm and handsome candles. Three bushels of the berries would furnish four pounds of wax, and twenty-four pounds of the wax would make one hundred candles of a foot long.

The missionary formed from the savages a company of assisting clergy. About forty of his young converts, arrayed in cassocks and surplices, officiated in this way at the sacrifice of the mass, at the chants, and in the processions on days of solemn ceremonial. At short distances from the village, the Indians built two small chapels, one dedicated to the Virgin, the other to the Guardian Angel. These chapels were placed near the paths, by which they went to the woods or the fields ; and they never

passed them without offering their devotions. The women, with zealous care, adorned them with such ornaments as their humble means allowed.

In this solitary situation, the hours of the priest were, as he tells us, crowded with employment. Scarcely, one would think, could the most active minister of the largest congregation be so busy. Twice every day his disciples repaired to the church; early in the morning to attend mass, and at sunset to unite in the evening prayer. They chanted or recited aloud the prayers, which he prepared with a view to fix attention by interesting the imagination. Besides the regular preaching on Sundays and saints' days, he suffered few working days to pass without giving them some moral exhortation adapted to what he supposed to be their wants or dangers.\*

---

\* I cannot forbear from inserting a beautiful picture of the scene portrayed, in a poem which supposes the time and place to be present, by one for whom may justly be claimed a high rank among the poets of our country.

“On the brow of a hill, which slopes to meet  
The flowing river, and bathe its feet —  
The bare-washed rock, and the drooping grass,  
And the creeping vine, as the waters pass —  
A rude and unshapely chapel stands,  
Built up in that wild by unskilled hands;  
Yet the traveller knows it a place of prayer,

After the service of the mass, he instructed the children and others in the catechism. The remainder of the time till noon he spent in listening to their various applications. They repaired to him in great numbers, and with all the familiarity of confidence, to communicate their complaints, sorrows, or anxieties, and to consult him concerning their marriages or other private affairs. He gave the needful directions or comfort, restored peace among such as had quarrelled, reproved the culpable by reprimands tempered with affection, and endeavored to send them all home satisfied and happy. Whatever may have been the fruits of his painstaking, no one acquainted with the Indian character will doubt, that his daily task was one requiring no

---

For the holy sign of the cross is there;  
And should he chance at that place to be,  
Of a Sabbath morn, or some hallowed day,  
When prayers are made and masses are said,  
Some for the living, and some for the dead,—  
Well might that traveller start to see  
The tall dark forms, that take their way  
From the birch canoe, on the river shore,  
And the forest paths, to that chapel door;  
And marvel to mark the naked knees

And the dusky foreheads bending there,—  
And, stretching his long, thin arms over these  
In blessing and in prayer,  
Like a shrouded spectre, pale and tall,  
In his coarse white vesture, Father Ralle!"

Whittier's *Mogg Megone*.

common share of patient, loving perseverance. The afternoon he employed in visiting the sick, and those who required peculiar attention or instruction. Having some medical skill, he acted as physician, administering such medicines as he judged best adapted to each case, and bestowing upon his patients as much as possible of his personal care.

His own manner of living and diet were of course extremely simple. His constant food was Indian corn, of which, pounded in a mortar and boiled, he made hominy. The only condiment he could have was supplied by maple sugar, prepared in the spring by the women, who collected the sap of the trees in vessels of bark, and boiled it down.\* Père de la Chasse relates that sometimes, in the winter, when the provisions of the Indians failed, Rale was reduced to the necessity of living upon nuts and acorns, and that he was never better contented than in these seasons of scarcity. During the last three years of his life, when the hunting and planting of the savages were much inter-

---

\* "The extracting of sugar from the sap of the maple was not a discovery of the early settlers of these regions; for, indolent and incurious as the North American Indians are known to be, it seems that some of their tribes were in the practice of manufacturing<sup>d</sup> this sort of sugar." *Penny Magazine*, Vol. V. p. 475.

rupted by war, he frequently experienced the most extreme privations. When, on such occasions, his friends at Quebec sent him the provisions necessary to subsistence, he wrote to them, "I am ashamed to have so much care taken of me; a missionary, born to suffer, ought not to fare so well." It was his custom to prepare his daily food and fuel, to cultivate his garden, to repair his dwelling, and to mend his clothes, with his own hands.

Between planting and harvest the Indians sometimes went to a great distance to take fish, and were absent from their village a long time. On these occasions, they would frequently beg their priest to accompany them, that they might not be deprived of their religious offices. When he could comply with their request, he would say, in their own language, *Kekikberba*, that is, "I consent, my children;" upon which they all cried out, *Ouri ourie*, one of their terms expressive of gratitude. Having arrived at the place of their destination, they immediately set themselves, in their rude way, to erect a temporary chapel, which was soon despatched. An altar was formed of a cedar plank carried for the purpose, over which was spread a decent canopy. The chapel received such decorations and furniture, as they had been able to transport on their journey; and there the morning and even-



ing prayers, and the holy sacrifice of the mass, were offered. They lived in their cabins of bark, which they could put up and furnish in an hour. Thus they constituted their village with very tolerable accommodations, till they returned to the settlement at Norridgwock to attend to their corn harvest.

When they were about to hold a council, which they often did, they deputed one of their principal persons to request Father Rale's attendance and assistance. It seems to have been his uniform custom to accept the invitation. He watched the course of their deliberations, sanctioned what he approved, and condemned what he disliked; always, as he says, giving weighty reasons for his opinion. His authority was doubtless sufficient to turn the scale on either side. Indeed, he himself declares, "My advice always decides their resolutions." The power, which by his own statement he possessed over these rude and fierce minds, he was accused, as we shall afterwards see, of using for bad purposes. To wield the authority of an autocrat, whether in high or humble station, is certainly one of the severest trials of human virtue. In religious and in social concerns, on solemn and on festival occasions, Rale was doubtless the undisputed oracle of his Indian disciples.

In 1697, he learned that a numerous body of

Indians, whom he calls the *Amalingans*,\* had established themselves at the distance of a day's journey from his village. His alarm, lest the influence of these neighbors might seduce some of his young Indians from the church, was soon changed into pious joy at their conversion. A valiant captain at Rale's settlement having been killed by the English, the Amalingans, according to Indian custom, sent deputies from their tribe to bear presents to the relatives of the deceased, and to take part in the funeral dance. These messengers happened to arrive at a time when a religious procession, with considerable pomp, was taking place. The novelty of the spectacle, it seems, struck them with wonder, as they gazed. The watchful missionary thought it a favorable moment to win their attention. He spoke to them, in terms adapted to their comprehension, and suited to soften and move their feelings, explaining his articles of faith, and begging them to become beloved children of the Great Spirit by accepting prayer and baptism.

The Indian deputies thanked him for his kind speech, but said they could give no answer to

---

\* I have not been able to find this name elsewhere. The French sometimes designated the Indian tribes by terms, which it is now difficult to identify with any known names.

his proposal till they had returned to their tribe and consulted their leading men. The next autumn, Rale, finding an opportunity to send them a message, reminded them that he still bore them in his heart and in his prayers, and expected to hear from them again. "We consent," said they, "to accept the *prayer*, which the father proposes to us, and we are all resolved to embrace it." Accordingly, they invited him to visit and instruct them, which he of course was not slow to do. As soon as he arrived among them, he planted a cross, took measures to have a chapel built of bark, and an altar prepared. While the work was in progress, he visited their wigwams, and instructed them in religion. So docile were they, that after several days of unremitted labor among them, he fixed upon a time for the ceremony of baptism, to which they willingly came, first the leading men, and afterwards the rest, in successive bands, till they all received the sign of discipleship. When he departed, they addressed him in an affectionate speech, to which he replied by a loving exhortation, proposing that they and his people should consider a plan of forming one tribe and living together. Whether this was ever done, he does not tell us. "What a comfort," says Rale, "what a sweet recompense does the missionary find for his toils, in thus

being permitted to bring a whole tribe into the way of salvation !” \*

In such employments as have now been described, the days of the devoted priest passed swiftly away in the wilderness. So pressing were his engagements, and so multiplied and unseasonable the calls of the Indians, that he affirms he could scarcely find privacy for his own devotions, or time for sleep. After a vexatious

---

\* Doubtless the pious zeal of the good father made him happy in this belief, without applying any very searching tests to the reality of his success. Charlevoix, who had no disposition to underrate the result of such labors, has remarked, “In truth, one must not suppose that a savage is convinced, because he appears to approve of what is declared to him. They assume the appearance of being entirely persuaded of the truth of matters, to which they have not paid the slightest attention, and which they have not been able to comprehend.” The imagination of the Indians was easily excited, and their feelings strongly moved, by pageantry and by affecting appeals or descriptions; but upon minds so rude and fickle, an impression, that could be called permanently religious, was probably seldom made. When *Oureouharé*, the Oneida chief, whose alleged conversion made him a useful partisan to the French, but who was a sorry Christian, was dying, the missionary who attended upon him described in such lively terms the sufferings of the Savior and the indignities he endured, that the Indian chief, in a burst of indignation against the Jews, exclaimed, “If I had been there, I would not have suffered them to treat my God so.” Charlevoix, *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XVII.

experience of these irregularities, he adopted the rule, that he would admit no one and speak to no one from the time of the evening prayer till after the next morning mass, except on some urgent necessity, such as that of attending a dying person. Meanwhile he constantly studied, with as much exactness as possible, the language of the Abnakis, and collected materials for his Dictionary. He was living for a work, which, if humble, became great by being to him a work of duty. He gave himself to it with the energy of purpose, which always makes an element of true heroism. His firmness was soon to be severely tested. Days of dark strife were at hand; and the loneliness of the forest was to be reached by passionate conflict and deeds of blood.

## CHAPTER IV.

*New France and New England. — Territorial Claims of the French. — Disputes about these involving the Eastern Indians. — Their Complaints. — Influence of the Jesuits. — Rale's Remarks on the Attachment of the Indians to the Church. — Ascendency of the French over the Indians.*

OF the nations, that rushed into the career opened in the western world to the enterprise or cupidity of Europe, France was one of the foremost. Francis the First, the splendid rival of Charles the Fifth, is said to have observed, "My brothers, the kings of Spain and Portugal, have divided America between them; but I should like to know what clause in the last will of Adam bequeaths it to them, and disinherits me." From the time when Cartier explored the St. Lawrence, and erected upon one of the heights on its banks a cross, bearing a shield with three *fleurs de lis* carved on it, which attracted the wondering gaze of the natives, to the first permanent French settlement at Port Royal in Acadia, about seventy years had passed. In 1608, two years before the discovery of James River, in Virginia, Quebec was founded by a

company of merchants, under the guidance of Champlain, who called the country *New France*. Thus, when our fathers came to Plymouth and Massachusetts, the French were already in possession of what is now called Canada and Nova Scotia. Old France and Old England were transplanted to the western wilderness, and a New France and a New England rose up here in near vicinity, as did the parent states in Europe. Between such neighbors a feverish jealousy, ever ready to break out into resentment and violence, might be expected to exist. National antipathy, and the passion for colonial aggrandizement, on each side, would be sharpened by the sensitive hostility of religious feeling, where the French Catholic and the English Puritan met upon bordering territories. Each party charged the other with encroachment or aggression; and their relation was a constant interchange of accusation or defiance.

At the time when Rale came to Canada, the French asserted a claim to the whole eastern coast, to Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Newfoundland, Labrador, and Hudson's Bay. Towards New England, they stretched their territory to the Kennebec, which they affirmed to be the true boundary on that side. These claims were never admitted by the English. Nova Scotia,

which had been conquered from the French by Sir William Phipps, in 1690, was restored by the treaty of Ryswick, in 1697.

The French maintained, that by this act a territory, extending as far west as the Kennebec, or even further, which they called *Acadia*,\* was conceded to them. England and the English colonies, on the other hand, strenuously asserted their claim to all the country west of the St. Croix, as belonging to the province of Massachusetts. "Had peace continued, the St. George would have been adopted as a compromise;" † but restless hostilities, which scarcely at any time could be said to be wholly suppressed, and which soon broke forth in fearful tragedies of violence, precluded any just settlement of the question. By the twelfth article of the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, "his Most Christian Majesty ceded to England forever the whole of Acadia, or Nova Scotia, in conformity to its ancient limits." ‡ But then, what were these ancient limits? Here was a still undecided question. Misunderstandings and conflicting claims continued to fes-

---

\* "Acadia has been stretched and contracted at different times, as the French have found it to serve their interest." *Hutchinson*.

† Bancroft, Vol. III. p. 192.

‡ Charlevoix, Tom. II. p. 374.



ter in the minds of the respective colonies ; and all hope of a pacific adjustment was yet to be for a long time baffled.

The Eastern Indians, whose lands and settlements lay in the wilderness between or among those of the rival powers, were of course involved in these disputes, as parties concerned, or as allies. Aggressions, or what they construed as such, were committed on their possessions. These provoked them to retaliate in their own summary and fierce way ; and the consequences were outbreaks of wasting hostility, from time to time. The red men, with but rude notions of property, could not comprehend the logic of diplomacy ; and the white men on both sides, it is to be feared, were often but too willing to serve their own purposes by cajoling or exciting their untutored neighbors. When the matter in dispute came to be discussed by negotiation or conference, it was quite likely to be darkened by the passions, the vague statements, and the undefined claims, of the respective parties ; and sometimes the only result was to prepare fresh materials for another war.

Under these circumstances, we cannot be surprised to find that angry accusations, touching the affairs of the Indians, were exchanged between the French and English colonists. Crimi-

nation on the one side was met by recrimination on the other. The Canadians, who seem to have regarded the natives as in a special manner their wards or allies, insisted that the Massachusetts people were perpetually invading their property, and attempting to detach them from their allegiance to the Catholic church. Massachusetts, on the other hand, complained vehemently that it was the settled policy of the Jesuits and of the Canadian government to rouse the Indians to the resistance of rightful claims, and stimulate their wild passions to the work of ferocious warfare. In both statements, we may easily believe, there was something of truth, and not a little of the violence of exasperated feeling.

The Indian complaints of aggression were doubtless, in many cases, well founded. English traders and settlers encroached on their lands from time to time. The rovers of the forest were annoyed by finding the wild freedom of their woods and ranges interrupted by the mills, forts, and houses, of the white man. When inquiry or discussion arose concerning these, deeds or grants of the land, from a sachem, or some person of authority, were alleged, and sometimes produced. But, as it was believed by the Indians that these titles had frequently been obtained for the most frivolous compensations, a large tract,

it was said, being sometimes given for a bottle of brandy, the transactions were regarded as fraudulent and illusory.

Besides, the natives generally considered a conveyance of land by one of their sagamores as amounting merely to a consent to the purchaser's right of residence or use, in common with the tribe, during the life of the sagamore. It may readily be supposed, therefore, that they would refuse to listen to claims resting on such grounds. But, though these cases of wrong did exist, their number and importance were doubtless much exaggerated.\* Complaints of promises violated or unfulfilled by the English served, also, to swell the irritation which French influence, so far as it extended, never allowed to subside.

This influence wrought with the greater effect by its intimate connection with a church ever restless, subtle, and powerful in its agency. In

---

\* The following confession and exculpation are quoted from a New England writer of those times. "Not that I am insensible that many have stigmatized the English, as chiefly culpable in causing the first breach between them (the Indians) and us, by invading their properties, and defrauding them in their dealings; but to censure the public for the sinister actions of a few private persons is utterly repugnant to reason and equity; especially, considering the great care that the legislative power had taken to protect the natives and their interests." Penhallow's *Indian Wars*, Coll. of N. H. Hist. Soc. Vol. I. p. 20.

1611, Champlain, himself so zealous for his religion as to have often on his lips the saying, "that the salvation of one soul was of more value than the conquest of an empire," induced four priests, of that strictest portion of the Franciscan order called in France *Recollets*, to come to the wilds of Canada for spiritual labor. This beginning was soon and steadily followed by fresh arrivals, from time to time, of the servants of the church. The Jesuits, whose subtle activity was far better suited to effect the purposes of France, than the unambitious gentleness of the mendicants of St. Francis, made their appearance on this mission in 1632. Wherever the Jesuits went, the work of education was generally united with religious labor. In 1635, a seminary, or college, of this order was established at Quebec, by the suggestion and agency of René Rohault, son of the Marquis de Gamache. This Seminary, of course, became a central point of strength to the missions. As these proceeded year after year, the Jesuits were desirous of having some dignified personage at the head of the church in this country. François de Laval, titular Bishop of Petrea, received the appointment of Bishop *in partibus infidelium*; and, in 1670, the church of Quebec was constituted a bishop's see. Before this, the Jesuits had obtained a patent, by which they were authorized to pur-

chase lands, and hold property, as they did in France.

To the agency of this astute and indefatigable order the French government looked, as their chief reliance for the extension of their North American dominion. The Society of Jesus understood that they were to work for political as well as religious purposes; and they suffered not the trust to slumber forgotten in their hands. The doctrine of passive, unconditional obedience, which lay at the very foundation of the order, made them devoted agents where their services could be once obtained. The will of the individual was annihilated before the will of the directing power. As the limbs of a lifeless body, moved by no choice or agency of its own, or as a staff in the hands of its possessor, so the members of the society were to resign themselves without a volition to the guidance of their superiors.\*

Such a body of ecclesiastical soldiery, with its "serried files" reaching through the Old World

---

\* "Et sibi quisque persuadeat, quod qui sub obedientia vivunt se ferri ac regi a divina Providentia per superiores suos sinere debent, perinde ac si cadaver essent, quod quoquo-versus ferri et quacunquē ratione tractari se sinit; vel similiter atque senis baculus, qui ubicunquē et quacunquē in re velit eo uti, qui eam manu tenet, ei inservit." *Constitutiones et Declarationes examinis generalis Soc. Jesu.* Romæ, 1570. P. VI. § 1, as quoted by Penrose.

and the New, and moved by the word of a few master-spirits, could be brought to bear with almost incalculable power on any point of action. Among its numerous trainbands were always to be found many men of singular ability and shrewdness, animated by a spirit of dauntless self-sacrifice; which has seldom been equalled in the history of civil or religious enterprise, and furnished with a pliant system of theological ethics, which could easily shape itself to the demand of any present circumstances, finding a justification of the means in the end, and, if necessary, changing crimes into virtues.

That they devoted themselves to the interests of France in the New World with obedient zeal, cannot be denied. Nor can we doubt, that, like most eager partisans, they were frequently unscrupulous in their methods of service. Charlevoix exhibits, with an exultation natural enough in his position, their successful agency in keeping alive the hostility of the Indians, or in renewing it when they were disposed to peace with the English.\* In his pages, as Mr. Bancroft has forcibly observed, "the unavailing cruelties of midnight incendiaries, the murder and scalping of the inhabitants of peaceful villages, and the captivity of helpless women

---

\* *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XV.

and children, are diffusely narrated as actions that were brave and beautiful.”\*

It is not surprising that the people of Massachusetts cherished a deep and bitter indignation against an influence so powerful, which was ever ready to act upon the reckless passions of the natives on the eastern frontier. Father Rale, as we shall see, became the most prominent object of this keen resentment. Nor was this feeling confined to Massachusetts. The mischievous agency perpetually exerted in this way upon the Indians called the Five Nations so exasperated the Assembly of New York, that they made it a capital crime for a priest to be found in that province.†

The French colonists appear to have preoccupied the favor of the natives, and to have retained it more uniformly than the English. Rale willingly persuaded himself that this partiality was owing to their rooted attachment to the church. Convenience and advantage, he says, would have led them to connections with

---

\* Hist. of the U. S. Vol. III. p. 188.

† In 1700, a law was passed by the New York legislature “for hanging every Popish priest that came voluntarily into the province, which was occasioned by the great number of French Jesuits, who were continually practising upon our Indians.” Smith’s *History of New York, with a Continuation*, &c. Albany, 1814.

the English, to whose settlements they were much nearer than to Quebec. But in despite of these motives of interest, their faith was infinitely dearer to them than any thing else; and the dread of losing the offices of their religion, and sinking back to their former heathenism, bound their hearts fast to the Canadians.

Rale likewise relates, that in a conference with the Governor of Massachusetts, the Indians reminded him that their religious interests had received no attention from the English. "Neither those who preceded you," said they, "nor your ministers, have ever spoken to us of prayer or of the Great Spirit. They thought only of our beaver skins and furs; they were so eager for these that they could never get enough; and so far as we could supply an abundance of these, we were excellent friends, but no further. On the other hand, when we once lost our way, and wandered a long time till we came to a village in the neighborhood of Quebec, the Black Robes\* met us, and without stopping to say a word about our furs, began at once to speak to us of the Great Spirit, of heaven, and hell, and prayer. We heard them with pleasure; we desired and received baptism; we returned to our country, and told our brethren what had hap-

---

\* That is, the Jesuit priests.



pened; they desired the same happiness; they set out to seek the Black Robes, and ask baptism of them. This is the way the French have treated us.” \*

Doubtless the missionary overrated not a little the piety of his Indians, and the permanent effect of religious motives on their feelings. But some of the English themselves saw and confessed their error in not having made, sooner and more effectually, the spiritual good of the eastern natives an object of interest. “God,” says Penhallow, “has made them a terrible scourge for the punishment of our sins; and probably that very sin of ours in neglecting the welfare of their souls. For we have not expressed the like laudable care for them, as hath been done in the southern and western parts of the country.† But indeed we have rather aimed to advance a private trade, than to instruct them in the principles of true religion. This brings to my remembrance a remarkable saying of one of their chief sachems, when, a little before the war broke out, I asked wherefore it was they were so much bigoted to the French, considering their traffic with them was

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. p. 297, and Tom. XXIII. p. 285.

† Penhallow refers to the pious and ever memorable labors of such men as Eliot, Mayhew, and others.

not so advantageous as with the English. He gravely replied, 'that the friars taught them to pray, but the English never did.'"\* The character of the people on the eastern frontier of New England is said to have been less religious, than in other parts. Their conduct and example were but ill adapted to secure the affections of the red men.†

Other influences, however, had their share in attaching the natives to the French. They had mingled much and very familiarly with these wild men; they were their military instructors, taught them something of European modes of warfare, and united with them as fellow-soldiers. The Indians believed, likewise, that their rights had been more respected by the Canadians, than by the people of New England. They had not been declared subjects of the crown of France, nor treated as such, but rather as friends whom his Most Christian Majesty would help and protect. The smallest tribes retained, apparently at least, their independence;‡ and to the dis-

---

\* *Indian Wars*, Coll. of N. H. Hist. Soc. Vol. I. p. 19.

† Belknap's *History of New Hampshire*, Vol. II. p. 47.

‡ The Abbé Raynal, speaking of the allies of the Canadians, and of the Indians living in the midst or in the neighborhood of their settlements, says, "Les uns ni les autres ne furent jamais sujets. Au milieu d'une grande colonie Européenne, les moindres peuplades gardoient leur

tant Indians the King of France, we are told, sent annual presents. Undoubtedly, the French government intended to stretch its dominion over the natives, and eventually to claim them as subjects, and their lands as possessions; but this policy of forbearance and respect, for the present, would naturally win the hearts of these rude men, who looked no further.

On the other hand, the relation of the Indians to the English, and to the Massachusetts government, was disturbed by irritating and perplexing claims. In treaties and sales, indeed, they acted for themselves, as an independent party in the business; and in other forms their rights were recognized. But in negotiations, they had repeatedly been induced to acknowledge themselves subjects of the British sovereign; yet they understood little or nothing of the nature of the acknowledgment; and though, after a war, they might in form confess that they had been rebels, still they had no conception of the proper meaning of the term, as applied to them in a political sense. Their strongest expressions were frequently merely words for the moment; and the bond thus expressed would fall asunder at the next touch of

---

indépendence. Tous les hommes parlent de la liberté; les sauvages seuls la possèdent." *Histoire Philosophique*, &c. Liv. XVI.

angry or excited feeling. The Indian notion of freedom was perpetually offended by the political and territorial claims of the English, whose policy towards them was not so wise, perhaps not so just, as that of the rival nation.

On the whole, notwithstanding occasional protestations to the contrary, it is evident that, owing to the causes already mentioned, strengthened by the constant and affectionate assiduity of the Jesuit missionaries, the French had gained an ascendancy over the Indians which the English could not subdue.\* The irritation of the people of Massachusetts would naturally be aggravated by finding their enemies in possession of such an advantage.

Both parties would have acted more wisely, had they followed Lord Bacon's advice to colonists; "If you plant where savages are, do not entertain them with trifles and gingles; but use them justly and graciously, with sufficient guard nevertheless; and do not win their favor by helping them to invade their enemies; but for their defence it is not amiss."†

---

\* Yet the conduct of the French towards such of the natives, as were not friendly to them, was frequently barbarous and merciless. For evidence of this, see Halkett's *Historical Notes*, Ch. III.

† Essays, XXXIII.

## CHAPTER V.

*War with the Eastern Indians. — Treaty at Pem-  
aquid. — Violation of it ascribed to French  
and Jesuit Influence. — The Sachem Bomaseen  
made Prisoner. — His Report of the Teaching  
of the Jesuits. — Excitement of the Massa-  
chusetts People.*

It will be necessary to take some notice of the successive hostilities with the natives, which harassed the eastern parts of New England, so far as these are connected with the subject of this memoir.

When Rale came to Canada, the long and fearful war with the Indians, sometimes designated as *King William's war*, had recently broken out. It began in 1688, and lasted ten years, till the peace of Ryswick, in 1698. Cotton Mather entitles his account of this distressing period, "*Decennium Luctuosum.*"\* For a part of the time, Rale was engaged in his mission to Illinois, and, of course, was too far distant from the scene of hostility to be in any way connected with it. During the last six or seven years of the strife, he was at his station among the Abnakis, and

---

\* It constitutes an Appendix to Book VII. of the *Magnalia*.

must have taken a deep interest in the agitation. Yet but little occurs that connects his name in any distinct manner with the public affairs of this period.

This war had its origin in resentment, on the part of the natives, of injuries real or supposed. They complained that their privilege of fishing in Saco River had been invaded by obstructions; that their lands had been granted by patents to English settlers; and that they had been wronged by frauds in trade. In the treaty of peace, at the close of King Philip's war, 1678, it had been stipulated that every English family on the debated lands, in consideration of being allowed to remain unmolested, should pay the natives a quitrent of a peck of corn annually. The Indians now alleged, that the inhabitants had refused to fulfil this engagement. The remembrance of the four hundred Indians, who, as they believed, by an act of base treachery, had been seized at Dover, in 1676, by Major Waldron, and a large part of whom had been flagitiously sold into foreign slavery, still rankled in the minds of men who were not accustomed to forget or forgive an injury.

The tale of the horrors of Indian warfare is familiar to all who have looked into the early history of New England, and needs not here be repeated. At an early period of the contest,

Dover was taken by a well managed stratagem, and destroyed, in revenge of Major Waldron's deed more than twelve years before. The aged major, who had then reached eighty years, and was a veteran in these wars, fell, from faintness, on his own sword, and died, after having been gashed in the breast and loins with sharp knives, and hearing, at each stroke, the exulting taunt, "Thus I cross out my account!"

Deceitful gleams of peace broke in upon the course of the bloody strife. In October, 1690, ten sagamores appeared at Wells, and, alleging that they had been befooled by the French, and were tired of the war, agreed to a truce of five months, and promised, at the end of that time, to procure a permanent peace. To the latter engagement they proved false, having been induced, as was believed, by French agency, not to appear at the time and place appointed. The war continued to rage with its wonted barbarity.

Again, in 1693, hope was entertained of bringing the work of fire and murder to a close. The Indians had become disheartened by the increase of the English forces and fortifications, and by the failure of supplies from the French. "All the charms of the French friar then resident among them," says Mather, "could not hinder them from suing to the English for peace." Thirteen sachems, representatives of the tribes

from Passamaquoddy to Saco, including, of course, the Abnakis, among whom Rale was stationed, appeared at the Pemaquid fort, and there entered into a treaty with English commissioners.\* It begins with the following statement. "Whereas a bloody war has, for some years now past, been made and carried on, by the Indians within the eastern parts of the province, against their Majesties' subjects, the English, through the instigation and influences of the French; and being sensible of the miseries which we and our people are reduced unto, by adhering to their ill counsel; we, whose names are hereunto subscribed," &c. The compact then proceeds to stipulate that the Indians "will at all time and times forever, from and after the date of these presents, cease and forbear from all acts of hostility towards the subjects of the crown of England, and will maintain a firm and constant amity and friendship with them;" and that they will "abandon and forsake the French interest, and will not in any wise adhere to, join with, aid, or assist them, in their wars or designs against the English."

Most ample engagements were given for the security of the Massachusetts people in their former settlements and possessions, and for the ad-

---

\* The treaty, with the signatures on both sides, is given in the *Magnalia*, Book VII.



justment of all future controversies, and all regulations of trade, by the General Assembly and Governor of Massachusetts. Indeed, the transaction appears to have been an unconditional submission, on the part of the natives, rather than a treaty for reciprocal advantages. The sachems, as a pledge of their integrity, delivered into the hands of the English commissioners five of their principal men as hostages, with the liberty of exchanging them for such others as might be acceptable to the Governor and Council.

The country now rejoiced in the prospect of a satisfactory peace. But the cherished hope proved a delusion. The Indians were false to their engagements; and a year had not passed before a large body of them, collected by *Sieur de Villieu*, who had formerly distinguished himself in the defence of *Quebec*, recommenced the usual course of savage warfare upon the English settlements.

The Massachusetts people ascribed this perfidy of the natives to their French supporters, the government of Canada, and the Jesuit missionaries. Count Frontenac, the Governor-General of New France, in consequence of his war with the Five Nations, and of danger apprehended from the arrival of an English fleet, was now beset with perilous difficulties. Should the eastern Indians remain true to their treaty of peace, his

position would be still more embarrassing and dangerous. It became an important point with him to induce them to violate their compact, and renew hostilities. The agents of whom he made use for this purpose, it is alleged, were the Jesuit priests, especially four, the most distinguished among them ; namely, M. Thury, Vincent Bigot, Jaques Bigot, and Sebastian Rale. The Indians were persuaded that the English prisoners in their hands were more than an equivalent for the hostages they had given. Thus the work of war was begun afresh.

That this account of the matter is essentially true, there is probably good reason to believe. Mather affirms that, before the warfare was renewed, the alarming information had been received, that "the Indians intended most certainly to break the peace, and had promised the French priests, taking the sacrament thereupon, to destroy the first English town they could surprise." After hostilities had finally ceased, in 1698, the same writer relates, "When our English messengers argued with them upon the perfidiousness of their making a new war after their submission, the Indians replied, that they were instigated by the French to do what they did, against their own inclinations ; adding, that there were two Jesuits, one toward Amonoscoggin,\* the other at

---

\* Androscoggin?

Narridgway,\* both of which they desired the Earl of Bellamont† and the Earl of Frontenac to procure to be removed, otherwise it could not be expected that any peace would continue long.” ‡

That the priests bound the natives to their promise of renewing the war, by the sanctity of the sacrament, may have been the invention of religious prejudice or of excited passion; and perhaps, when the war was over, and it became the interest of the Indians to gain as much as possible the good graces of the English, they claimed more merit than they deserved for disinclination, on their own part, to break the peace. But still, their story of French influence in the matter was, we have reason to believe, substantially correct. The trustworthy judgment of Hutchinson, who by no means winks out of sight the faults of the English, accepts this view of the case. Charlevoix's account strangely mistakes or misrepresents the whole affair.§

\* Norridgwock.

† Who had recently been appointed Governor of Massachusetts.

‡ Magnalia, Book VII.

§ *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XV. This account is animadverted upon by Hutchinson, (Vol. II. p. 73,) who, however, candidly, and with some probability, remarks, “Charlevoix may have been misinformed by the Indians, who have always kept from the French, as far as they could, the submissions made to the English.”

Other transactions occurred, to swell still more the exasperated feeling, in which Rale, by his position and agency, became deeply involved. After the violation of plighted faith above related, and the renewal of the work of blood, it may be presumed that the English would be watchful, and ready for retaliation. Among the Indians who had signed the treaty at Pemaquid was Bomaseen, a Norridgwock or Kennebec sachem of considerable distinction. He had been personally engaged in some of the most recent hostilities. In November, 1694, this man and two other natives presented themselves at the fort of Pemaquid, bearing a flag of truce, and desiring to speak with Captain March, the commander of the fort. They pretended to have just arrived from Canada, and to be much troubled at hearing of the late aggressions. Bomaseen was recognized; and, as soon as he and his companions were admitted within the fortification, they were seized and put under arrest. Captain March required them to tell who were the actors in some of the late outrages upon the English, and why and by whom the plighted peace had been broken. They refused or were unable to give the demanded information. They were detained as traitorous or suspected persons; and Bomaseen was sent to Boston, where he was thrown into prison. Before this, four other Indians had been

seized, under somewhat similar circumstances, at the fort in Saco.

This conduct was bitterly resented by the French, who called it base and inexcusable treachery. Our own writers have spoken of it with censure. Hutchinson regards it as a violation of good faith, under all the circumstances of the case, and observes, "This is one of those actions, which have caused the English to be charged with injuring the Indians, and provoking them to all the cruelties which have been committed as a just return. I do not undertake to justify it." The Indians at Pemaquid were welcomed to the fort with the promise that they should be received kindly and suffer no harm, which promise, it was afterwards said by way of defence, was strictly observed *so long as they stayed there*. This violation of good faith must be regarded as one of the instances, so sadly frequent, in which the Indian has been the victim of the white man's power.

John Pike, who seems to have been an officer at Pemaquid, wrote an account of the affair to the Governor and Council of Massachusetts, in which he says, "We are credibly informed the Indians came with a certain design to betray their Majesties' fort here, under pretence of trade and friendship, and so they are fallen into a pit of their own digging." He likewise remarks, "We thought it not unlawful, nor culpable, to appre-

hend such perfidious villains and traitors, (though under a white rag,) that have so often falsified their promise to the English, and make no conscience of breaking the peace, whenever it serves their turn, although never so solemnly confirmed with subscriptions and oaths." This is not the judgment of the transaction, which impartiality requires ; certainly it served to whet to a keener edge the resentment of the natives and the French.

On the other hand, the minds of the Massachusetts people were exasperated by what, according to Mather, they learned from Bomaseen. While he was a prisoner at Boston, one of the clergymen there sought and obtained a conference with him. The sachem, it seems, with the other Indians present, desired to be instructed in the Christian religion, being suspicious that the French had greatly misled them in this matter. When the minister asked what they had heard from their French teachers, Bomaseen replied, they had been taught that Jesus Christ was of the French nation ; that his mother, the Virgin Mary, was a Frenchwoman ; that the English had been his murderers ; that he rose and went to heaven ; and that all who would gain his favor must revenge his quarrel upon the English as far as possible. Were these things so ? The minister, in his reply, availing himself of such a symbolical mode of instruction as he supposed might

best suit their minds, took a tankard of drink standing on the table, and told the Indians that Jesus Christ gave us good religion, like the good liquor in the tankard, but that the French had wickedly poured poison into this good liquor. This illustration he expanded and applied at some length, so much to the satisfaction of Bomaseen, it is said, that he lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, declaring that he would have no more French poison, but desired to be taught the true religion, to the salvation of his soul.

It may be said, that the craft and uncertainty of the Indian character will justify us in believing that both the report of the teaching of the Jesuit missionaries, and the alleged desire for better instruction, were a device to cajole the minister and gratify his prejudices. Be that as it may, the belief that such things had been taught, and that these wild men had been led to regard the destruction of the English as a matter of sacred religious vengeance, must have stimulated to a yet higher degree the already warm indignation of the Massachusetts people.

Another occurrence, which supplied fuel to the fire of exasperation during this war, was the seizure, by Captain Chubb, the English commander at Pemaquid, of several Indian leaders with their companions, who had come to the fort for the alleged purpose of bringing about an exchange of prisoners. Four of them were killed, some

were made prisoners, and a few escaped to enrage their brethren with the story of the outrage. Heated partisans attempted to palliate the transaction; but the general judgment of the English condemned it as a shameful piece of villany.

Such were the incitements to angry feeling on both sides, fomented continually into wrath, which died not out when peace came, but remained to swell the storm in which Rale was destined to be an actor and a victim. Among the elements of alarm and agitation at this period should be mentioned, perhaps, the melancholy delusion about witchcraft, which Mather calls "the prodigious war made by the spirits of the invisible world upon the people of New England in the year 1692." He adds, that he had met "with some strange things," which had made him believe "that this inexplicable war might have some of its original among the Indians, whose chief sagamores are well known unto some of our captives to have been horrid sorcerers and hellish conjurers, and such as conversed with demons."\* Whether Mather's opinion on this subject was shared by the community in general at that time, I know not. The reputation of one so renowned for his acquaintance with demonocracy might give it no little currency. As far as the dark suspicion prevailed, that witchcraft might be a diabolical

---

\* *Magnalia*, Book VII.



emanation from Indian sorcery, we may easily conceive how it would, in the midst of a distressing war, inflame the violence of the New England people against the natives and their French instigators.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

*French and English Claims after the Peace. — Uneasiness among the Indians. — Action of Massachusetts against the Jesuits and Popish Missionaries. — Conference between Governor Dudley and the Indian Sachems. — Different Accounts of it by Rale and Penhallow. — War renewed. — Rale's Chapel burned. — Peace, and Treaty with the Indians. — The Chapel rebuilt.*

THE treaty of Ryswick brought a breathing-time of peace. But it left the French and English with the controversy still upon their hands respecting the limits of Acadia, which had now returned to the possession of the crown of France. The English asserted that only the province of Nova Scotia was meant by Acadia; and against the French claim of possession as far west as the Kennebec, they urged the fact, that in the reign of James the Second, when an alliance existed

between the two nations, Andros, Governor of Massachusetts, had garrisoned Pemaquid, and taken possession of Penobscot. The force of the argument was not admitted by France, who still renewed her old claim.

Other elements of unrest were constantly at work. In 1699, a mischievous and unfounded report reawakened the scarcely quieted passions of the Indians. They were told, that, despite of the assurances of safety given them at the late settlement of peace, a plan was in progress among the English colonists to destroy them by a treacherous and general onset. The French were naturally considered the authors of this malicious alarm. The successor of Frontenac in the government of Canada, M. de Callieres, it was thought, had reasons of pressing weight for disturbing, if possible, the amity which the recent treaty might introduce between the hitherto warring parties on the eastern line of New England, and for endeavoring to secure the natives by any means to his own service. On the other hand, a rumor ran through the colonies of an intended general rising of the Indians, from all quarters, for the purpose of extirpating the English.\* The feeling of the country, therefore, though warfare

---

\* Hutchinson (Vol. II. p. 120) thinks these reports may have had a different origin from that commonly assigned.

had ceased, was any thing but one of quiet and security.

This state of things required the notice of government. Governor Bellamont put forth a proclamation of a judicious and pacific character, enjoining upon the people of Massachusetts to abstain carefully from giving offence or provocation to the Indians, at the same time to keep a watchful outlook upon their motions, and be prepared for their own defence.

Another measure adopted by the colonial government at this time originated in the belief, that the French friars had been the chief agents in kindling the late alarms. An act was passed by the General Court of Massachusetts, on the 15th of June, 1700, to eject them entirely from the province. After the following preamble, "Whereas divers Jesuit priests and Popish missionaries, by their subtle insinuations, industriously labor to debauch, seduce, and withdraw the Indians from their due obedience unto his Majesty, and to excite and stir them up to sedition, rebellion, and open hostility against his Majesty's government," it proceeds to enact that "they shall depart from and out of the same province on or before the 10th day of September, 1700." If any one should be found in the province after that time, it is decreed that he "shall be deemed and accounted an incendiary and a disturber of the pub-

lic peace and safety, and an enemy to the Christian religion, and shall be adjudged to suffer perpetual imprisonment. And if any person, being so sentenced and actually imprisoned, shall break prison and make his escape, and be afterward retaken, he shall be punished with death."

All persons were forbidden to receive or harbor these priests. The act was explained not to extend to "any of the Romish clergy, which shall happen to be shipwrecked, or through other adversity shall be cast on shore or driven into this province," provided they should depart as soon as possible, and during their stay make known to some magistrate their circumstances, and follow his directions while they remained.\* Rale must have felt that danger was thickening around his path. The jealousy and irritation of the country, however, by degrees subsided for a year or two into comparative repose.

In 1698, the Indians, by assistance doubtless from Quebec, had a chapel built at the Norridgewock settlement. Massachusetts regarded and

---

\* See *Acts and Laws of the General Court of Massachusetts Bay*, Vol. IV. p. 107. The act is also on file at the State House, Boston. It is worthy of observation, that an act of the same general import, and partly in the same words, occurs as far back as May, 1647. See *Charters and General Laws of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay*, p. 129.

complained of this as a French encroachment; "but I know not for what reason," says Hutchinson, "except their having a Frenchman for their priest can be thought one." Till this chapel was erected, Rale had used the rude and simple one in which he began his ministry at that place. The new sanctuary might serve to strengthen the attachment of the natives to the Canadian interests.

The government of Massachusetts, in May, 1701, manifested some degree of just care for the natives, by passing an act "to prevent and make void clandestine and illegal purchases of lands from the Indians." Such regulations, however, though not without effect, in many cases only compelled the fraudulent desires of unprincipled citizens to take a more circuitous course towards their object.

Governor Dudley came into office in 1702. At that time the Indian affairs were in a tolerably quiet state. Soon, however, indications of disturbance appeared. Governor Dudley, wishing to anticipate and suppress the rising mischief, in the summer after his arrival, 1703, despatched messages to the eastern sagamores, requesting them to meet him on the 20th of June at Casco. At that time and place, accordingly, the meeting was held. The Governor was attended by several members of the General Court, and other gentle-

men from Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It was a great occasion to the Indians. Many of their sachems, accompanied by large numbers of the various eastern tribes, presented themselves, painted in a fantastic variety of colors, and decorated with their gayest and most terrific ornaments. The red man pranked himself in his best, to meet the white man's Governor and chiefs. The leading persons on both sides assembled in a large tent, where the English mingled themselves promiscuously among the natives, not being, it is said, wholly free from apprehensions of treacherous peril.

Of this conference accounts so different are given by the New England historians, and by Father Rale, as to present a perplexing problem of discrepancy. The contemporary historian, Penhallow,\* furnishes, so far as I know, the earliest English narrative, which is repeated by Williamson† and others. Hutchinson‡ merely records the fact of the meeting in a single sentence. Rale's relation is somewhat particular and lively.§ The English account states, that the Governor rose and addressed the Indians as follows; "I am commissioned by the great and

---

\* *Indian Wars, N. H. Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. pp. 20 - 22.

† *History of Maine*, Vol. II. p. 35.      ‡ Vol. II. p. 135.

§ *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. pp. 270 - 275.

victorious Queen of England, and I come to visit you as friends and brothers. If any troubles or difficulties have taken place since our people made the last treaty with you, I wish to reconcile them all." After a brief space of silence, Captain Simmo, the orator on the Indian side, rose to reply; "We thank you," said he, "for coming, with so many of the Council and great men of the province, to give us a visit. We love peace, and our desire is for friendship. As high as the sun is above the earth, so far from us is any design of making the least breach between us and you." The natives then presented the usual pledge of amity and good faith, the wampum belt, which was reciprocated by presents.

They next invited the Governor to two pillars of stones, which had been set up at a former treaty, and had been called, with beautiful significance, *The Two Brothers*. Both parties, as a confirmation of friendship, threw additional stones upon the columns. Negotiations were entered into, which employed two or three days. It was agreed, that trading-houses should be established for the Indians, that a price should be fixed for commodities, and an armorer provided for them at the charge of the English. Presents were made to them and kindly received. The whole was crowned with dancing and loud acclamations of joy. Bomaseen, who, it seems, had been re-

leased from prison, and a Captain Samuel, came in and said, that several missionaries from the friars had lately been among them to seduce them from their union and allegiance to the crown of England, but without effect; "for," said they, "we are as firm as the great rocks, and shall continue so as long as the sun and moon endure."

But a story is told, that when the interview was concluded by firing a volley on each side, the English having desired the Indians to fire first, the guns of the latter were found to be charged with bullets. It has been remarked, that they probably "had come prepared to treat or to fight, as the case might require;"\* but Penhallow believes that they designed to make the white men their victims, and were only prevented by finding their own counsellors and sachems so intermingled with the English in the assembly, that they could not destroy the latter without endangering the former.

It may well be doubted whether they had any settled purpose of that kind; but the New England people regarded it as an instance of that *Punic faith*, which they believed they had so often found among the Indians. The suspicion was strengthened by learning, that three days after the meeting broke up, a body of two hundred

---

\* Drake's *Book of the Indians*, Book III. p. 117.



French and Indians came to the place; it was then supposed that certain delays, which the Pig-wacket sachem had interposed in the negotiation, were contrived to gain time for the arrival of this additional force to fall upon the English.

If, now, we turn to Rale's account of the conference, we have a quite different story. "The English Governor, who had lately arrived at Boston," says he, "requested an interview with our Indians at a place on the seaboard, which he designated. They consented, and begged me to accompany them, in order to have my advice as to any artful propositions which might be made, that their answers might contain nothing opposed to the interests either of our religion or our King. I attended them, purposing to confine myself entirely within their quarters, to help them by my counsel, without appearing before the Governor." But the Indians, after salutes on both sides, as soon as they approached the shore and saw the Governor, landed precipitately, and thus brought their priest at once into his presence. "Thus," says Rale, "I found myself where neither I nor the Governor wished me to be." After the usual courtesies between them, the Governor stepped back among his own people, and, in the presence of Rale, thus addressed the Indians.

"I come to see you by the command of our

Queen; it is her desire that we should live in peace. If any Englishmen have been so thoughtless as to wrong you, do not avenge yourselves, but address your complaints to me, and I will render you prompt justice. If war should take place between us and the French, do you remain neutrals, and take no part in the strife. The French are as strong as we; let us, then, settle our quarrels by ourselves. We will supply all your wants; we will take your furs, and furnish you with such commodities as we have, at a moderate price."

"My presence," says Rale, "prevented him from saying all he intended; for it was not without a purpose that he had brought a *minister* with him. When he had finished his speech, the Indians retired to deliberate upon their answer. In this interval, the Governor took me aside and said, 'I beg you, Sir, not to induce your Indians to make war upon us.' I answered him, that my religion, and my character as a priest, bound me to give them only counsels of peace."

The Indians returned, and, through their spokesman, made the following reply to the Governor; "Great Captain, you tell us not to join ourselves to the French, in case of war. Know, that the Frenchman is my brother. He and I have the same religion; we live in the same wigwam at two fires, he at one fire, and I at the other. If

I see you come in at the side of my French brother's fire, I watch you from my mat, where I sit by the other fire. While I watch you, if I see that you carry a hatchet, I shall think, what does the Englishman mean to do with this hatchet? Then I rise from my mat to take notice what he will do. If he lifts his hatchet to strike my brother, the Frenchman, I take mine, and run to the Englishman to strike him. Can I see you strike my brother in my wigwam, and keep still on my mat? No, no; I love my brother too well, not to defend him. Thus I say to you, Great Captain, do no harm to my brother, and I will do none to you. Keep still on your mat, and I will keep still on mine."

Rale adds, "Thus ended this conference." How to reconcile these statements, which in some respects are so different, and, as to the main result of the meeting, quite opposite, I know not. Rale declares that he was personally present, a circumstance which leaves us no room to suppose, as we may in some other cases, that the Indians deceived him by misreporting their interview with the English. It is singular that Penhallow, who was living at the time, and took so deep an interest in these affairs, should not mention the presence and agency of Rale on this occasion. If the discrepancy between the respective narratives were only circumstantial or incidental, it

would admit an easy solution ; but when one account represents the Indians as entering readily into relations of amity, and giving pledges of friendship, with the English, besides declaring that the insidious attempts to seduce them from their allegiance had been in vain, while the other describes them as rejecting with disdain the Governor's invitations, and adhering fast and firm to their alliance with the French, it is only left for us to conjecture on which side lies an essential misrepresentation.

Rale's account, though it affixes no date to the transaction, unquestionably relates to the same meeting which Penhallow describes.\* The spirit of the Indians at Governor Shute's conference in 1717, (hereafter to be mentioned,) showed their decided partiality to the French in some respects, and a reluctance to admit English claims. It is possible that this may have blended itself with the earlier meeting under Dudley, in the remembrance of Rale, who wrote his account in 1723. Yet his representation differs very much from the

---

\* This point is settled by the fact, that both narratives represent the conference as taking place when Queen Anne was on the English throne ; whereas Shute's conference with the Indians (the only other case of a Governor's meeting them in this way during these wars) was in the reign of George the First. Other circumstances put the point beyond dispute.

other histories of Shute's interview also. On the whole, Penhallow's statement seems the more credible one. After Dudley's conference with the natives, the eastern inhabitants of New England entertained hopes of continued peace, laid aside their previous purpose of removing from their settlements, and had the prospect of being joined by many others. This could hardly have been the case, if the result of the meeting on the part of the Indians had been so decidedly unfriendly to the settlers, as represented by Rale.

But the hopes of peace were soon struck down by the outbreak of hostilities between the parent countries. From 1703 to 1713, the war sometimes called "Queen Anne's war" raged between France and England, involving the respective colonies in America. With this contest I have no further concern, than as it relates to the subject of this memoir. I will only remark, that its course was marked by tragedies and scenes of atrocity, at which the heart sickens. The eastern part of Massachusetts is said to have lost, before it was over, nearly a third part of its inhabitants.\*

---

\* "As the milk-white brows of the grave and ancient had no respect shown, so neither had the mournful cries of tender infants the least pity; for they (the Indians) triumphed at their misery, and applauded such, as the skilfullest artists, who were most dexterous in contriving the greatest tortures;

We learn, from one of *Rale's* letters, that as soon as the news of hostility between the two nations came from *Quebec*, the Indians of his station held their usual war-feast, preparatory to taking part in the strife. Two hundred and fifty warriors were found ready to engage in the struggle. A day was fixed upon for them to confess themselves to the priest before their departure. "I exhorted them," says he, "to maintain the same interest in their religion, as if they were at home; to observe carefully the laws of war; to practise no cruelty; to kill no one except in the heat of battle; and to treat their prisoners humanely." This is testimony in his own case, but may, nevertheless, be true; though it would have been difficult to persuade the English, at that time, that he gave the savages any other lessons than those of unsparing ferocity. *Rale*, sharing the deplorable spirit which darkens the moral sense of both parties in war, recounts with an air of triumph the service, which these two hundred and fifty warriors rendered in the work of devastation among the English settlements; and relates, that when they finally returned to their

---

which was enough to turn the most stoical apathy into streams of mournful sympathy and compassion." *Penhallow, N. H. Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. p. 23. But, the historian might have asked, would this have been so, if the English had always treated the natives with love and justice?

village, each man had two canoes loaded with the plunder they had taken.

One of the expeditions undertaken by Massachusetts in this war inflicted a heavy blow on Rale's village. In the winter of 1705, when the snow lay four feet deep, and "the country appeared like a frozen lake," Colonel Hilton, an officer of some distinction, was sent, with two hundred and seventy men, and provisions for twenty days, to Norridgwock, with the intention of surprising the enemy in their head-quarters. The dreary and severe march on snow-shoes was accomplished with great spirit. But the expedition failed of its main object. When Hilton's party reached Norridgwock, they found only a deserted settlement. "The large chapel, with a vestry at the end of it," and the wigwams, they burned to the ground. Whither the inhabitants had gone, we are not told. Rale speaks of this affair as "a sudden irruption made by the English, when the Indians were absent from their village." The priest returned to mourn over the smoking ruins of his church.

The history of the war furnished no other incident specially connected with my subject. It was brought to a close in 1713 by the treaty of Utrecht, which gave Nova Scotia, or Acadia, with its ancient limits, and the town of Port Royal, to Great Britain. The inhabitants of the ceded

country were also, says Williamson, "made over to the crown of Great Britain forever."

A letter of Rale to Captain Moody, just before the close of the war, deserves notice here. We have it in the original French.\* He tells Captain Moody, that, as he had learned from Quebec, peace was about to be concluded between France and England. News of an actual treaty to that effect might reach Boston sooner than Quebec. If so, he desires to be informed of it, that he might immediately despatch a messenger to Quebec with the intelligence, in order that the Governor of Canada might at once put a stop to any further hostile action on the part of the Indians. This request certainly indicates a more pacific temper, than was commonly ascribed to the missionary.

The Indians had become weary of the war, and rejoiced in the news of peace. Governor Dudley, at the request of several sachems presented to the commander of Casco garrison, agreed to meet them, and the delegates from their tribes, at Portsmouth, on the 11th of July, 1713. The result of the meeting was a treaty, in which the Indians conceded "that her Majesty's subjects, the English, shall and may quietly and peaceably enter upon, improve, and forever

---

\* Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. VIII. p. 258.



enjoy, all and singular the rights of land and former settlements, properties, and possessions, within the eastern parts of the provinces of the Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, and be in no wise molested or disturbed therein, saving unto the Indians their own ground, and free liberty of hunting, fishing, fowling, and all other lawful liberties and privileges.”

They likewise confessed that they had hitherto been unfaithful to their engagements; but they “resolved for the future not to be drawn into any perfidious treaty or correspondence to the hurt of any of her Majesty’s subjects of the crown of Great Britain.” The places and regulations of trade were submitted to the control of the provincial government, and all disputes were to be adjusted by a due course of law. “Hearty and sincere obedience” is pledged to the English crown. The whole was signed in due form by eight sachems, affixing their symbols, or marks, to their names.\*

Here again Rale’s account differs much from that just given, though the discrepancy is not so wide as in the former case. He states, that as soon as the peace, concluded in Europe, was made

---

\* The treaty, with its signatures and their respective marks, is given at length by Penhallow, *N. H. Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. pp. 82–86.

known, the governor of Boston informed the Indians, that if they would assemble at a place designated by him, he would confer with them on the present condition of affairs. They accordingly came to the appointed place, and the Governor spoke to them as follows.

“I give you to understand, that peace has been made between the King of France and our Queen, and that the King of France has, by treaty, ceded to our Queen Placentia and Port Royal, with all the adjacent territory. Thus, if you are willing, you and we will live in peace. We were at peace formerly, but the instigations of the French induced you to break it, and it was to please them that you came to kill us. Let us forget all these unfortunate matters, and cast them into the sea, that they may be seen no more, and that we may be good friends.”

To this the Indian orator replied; “We like well to learn that the sovereigns are at peace, and we have no objection to making peace with you. It is not we who have struck you these twelve years past; it is the Frenchman, who has made use of our arm to strike you. We were at peace, it is true. I had cast away my hatchet, I knew not where. I was quiet on my mat, thinking of nothing, when young men brought me a word from the Governor of Canada, by which he said to me, ‘My son, the Englishman has struck

me; help me to get revenge; take your hatchet, and strike the Englishman.' I, who have always hearkened to the word of the French Governor, search for my hatchet; I find it all rusty; I get it ready; I hang it at my girdle to go and strike you. Now the Frenchman tells me to throw it down. I cast it far from me, that the blood which reddens it may be seen no more. So, let us live in peace; I am willing. But you say that the Frenchman has given you Placentia and Port Royal, which is in my neighborhood, with all the lands adjoining. He may give you what he pleases. As for me, I have my land, which the Great Spirit has given me to live upon. While there shall be one child of my nation upon it, he will fight to keep it."

Thus, adds Rale, the whole business terminated amicably. The Governor made a great feast for the Indians, after which each one withdrew.\*

Of these two accounts, we can have no hesitation in preferring that of Penhallow. It bears the marks of historical truth; it gives the particulars of time and place, the names of the Indian chiefs with their signatures, and the treaty itself, at full length and in due form. Rale's statement, on the other hand, contains no par-

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. pp. 280-283.

ticulars, but is general and dramatic in its whole character; and as he does not pretend to have been present at the time, we may suppose that he made up his description from such a report, as the Indians were pleased to give him on their return.

After peace was definitively settled, the Indians, as *Rale* writes, began to think of rebuilding their church. His account is, that for this purpose they went to Boston, which was much nearer than Quebec, to procure workmen, with the promise of liberal wages; that the Governor received them with a great show of friendship, and offered to rebuild their church at the expense of Massachusetts, if they would dismiss their French priest and take an English minister in his place; that the Indians indignantly rejected his proposal, and said, "Keep your workmen, your money, and your minister; we will go to our father, the French Governor, for what we want." He adds, that in fact the Governor of Canada no sooner heard of the destruction of the church, than he sent workmen to rebuild it. He speaks with admiration of the beauty of the building, which he had done all in his power to decorate.

Of the application to the Governor of Massachusetts on this occasion, I have found no notice elsewhere. The statement that the church was erected through the agency of the Governor of

Canada disagrees with Hutchinson's account, who says, in 1724, that the church "had been built a few years before by carpenters from New England." He states the same fact incidentally in 1721, when he observes that Rale had "a smattering of English, enough to be understood by traders and tradesmen, who had been employed in building a church and other work at Norridgewock." There is a "letter from the Indians" to the Governor of Massachusetts in 1720,\* which if sent, as I suppose it was, from Rale's village, and written, as it appears to be, by himself, confirms Hutchinson's statement. It is a letter of very earnest complaint of the faithlessness and fraud of the workmen, who had made a contract to build their church, and a house, which I suppose to be the priest's house. It would seem to be an appeal to the Massachusetts government for justice in the transaction. I know not how to reconcile these facts with Rale's account of the matter.

---

\* Papers at the State House, volume marked *Indian*.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Governor Shute's Conference and Treaty with the Indians at Georgetown.—Reverend Joseph Baxter's Missionary Labors, and Correspondence with Rale.—Notice of Rale's Letter in Flynt's Common-place Book.—Protestant Missionaries to the Eastern Indians.—Extracts from Baxter's Journal.*

THE eastern parts of New England felt deeply the sad effects of the late war, in settlements laid waste, and in farms and estates given over to ruin. But peace revived enterprise in that quarter, and the solitudes were again in some degree peopled. Yet the red man was still restless and offended; for the French missionaries told him that his rights were violated by the mills, the forts, and houses, of the white man.

George the First succeeded Queen Anne on the English throne in 1714, and in the autumn of 1716 Colonel Samuel Shute came to Boston, as Governor of Massachusetts. His attention was immediately turned to the unsettled state of things on the eastern frontier; and, like Dudley, the summer after his arrival he invited the Indians to attend a mutual council. The meeting was accordingly held in August, 1717, near

the mouth of the Kennebec River, at Arrowsick Island, which, with Parker's Island, had, the preceding year, been constituted a municipal corporation, by the name of Georgetown.\* The Indians, in large numbers, with the chiefs of the several tribes, made their head-quarters at Puddlestone's Island.† It is uncertain whether

---

\* Williamson's *History of Maine*, Vol. II. p. 89.

† So stated in a tract entitled "Treaty of 1717, at Georgetown, on Arrowsick Island, August 9th, 1717; Annoque Regni Regis Georgii Magnæ Britanniae, &c. A Conference of his Excellency the Governor with the Sachems and Chief Men of the Eastern Indians." This tract, which is the original and most valuable authority concerning this transaction, was printed in 4to. Boston, 1717. It had become very scarce, when it was reprinted in 1827, in the *Coll. of N. H. Hist. Soc.* Vol. II. pp. 242-256. Hutchinson had this document before him in drawing up his account, (Vol. II. pp. 218-221,) and has given some extracts from it in his notes. The Reverend Mr. Baxter, one of the Governor's company on this occasion, left a manuscript journal of the voyage to Georgetown and of some of the doings there. This journal, by the kindness of its present possessor, the Reverend Mr. Mason, of Bangor, I have had an opportunity of examining. A part of it was published in a newspaper, the *Bangor Post*, July 18th, 1837. Mr. Baxter mentions, as attendants of the Governor, Samuel Sewall, Penn Townsend, Andrew Belcher, and Edmund Quincy, (these were of the Massachusetts Council,) and the Reverend Henry Gibbs, and Mr. Henry Flint. But besides these, there were present Samuel Penhallow, Mark Hunting, John Wentworth, Shadrack Walton, and Richard Waldron, of the New Hampshire

Father Rale accompanied them; but I am induced to think that he did. The Governor and his attendants members of the Council both of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, were at Arrowsick.

The conference began on the 9th of August, at a place on Arrowsick Island marked by the erection of "the Union flag." Shute had ordered a British flag to be given to the Indians, to be carried by them "in token of their subjection to King George," which, when they came, they set up in their headmost canoe. Two interpreters were bound, by oath administered by Judge Sewall, to be faithful in their office. Governor Shute then addressed them through one of the interpreters, reminding them of former treaties, informing them of the accession of King George, and of his being in peace and friendship with the French King, bidding them remember that they were subjects of his English Majesty, presenting to them the Bible in Indian and in English, and telling them, that Mr. Baxter, who was present, would teach them the word of life; "For," said the Governor, "we would gladly have you of the same religion with us." He further assured them that the Eng-

---

Council. Penhallow (*Indian Wars*, N. H. Hist. Coll. Vol. I. p. 89) has given an account of the meeting, not so full as might be expected from one who was present.



lish settlements in these parts would be an advantage to them in the way of trade ; that all fraud and unfair dealing would be prohibited ; and that their complaints, made to proper officers, would be promptly attended to. A school-master was likewise promised, to instruct their children.

The Indians, in order to have time to prepare their answer, requested permission to wait on his Excellency the next day, to which he consented, and promised to give them "an ox for dinner, and let them send some one to kill and dress it." They then withdrew to their quarters, where perhaps they had the advice of Rale.

The next day the sachems and chief captains returned, and, after salutations and professions of hearty amity, took notice of what the Governor had said about their being subjects of King George,\* "which we shall be," said they,

---

\* This was a point on which, according to Rale, the natives were extremely sensitive. "There is no Indian tribe," says he, "who are not very impatient of being regarded as the subjects of any power whatever ; they are willing enough to call themselves allies, but nothing more." *Lettres Edifiantes*, Vol. XVII. p. 305. On this occasion, as on some others, they were induced, however, to acknowledge the title of subjects, either from present policy perhaps, or because they regarded the acknowledgment as merely nominal.

"if we like the offers made us, and if we are not molested in the improvement of our lands." As to their religion, they were immovable. "All people," said they, "have a love for their ministers; and it would be strange if we should not love them that come from God. And as to the Bibles your Excellency mentioned, we desire to be excused on that point. God has given us teaching already, and if we should go from that, we should displease God. We are not capable to make any judgment about religion." After some talk about the English claims to their lands, for which, the Governor told them, deeds obtained from their ancestors could be shown, they desired further time for consultation.

In the afternoon they reappeared, and discoursed again about their lands, the purchase of which, they said, they could not understand. The Governor then ordered a "deed of sale of lands on Kennebec River, made by six Indian sagamores to Richard Wharton," to be laid before them and explained. The right on the west side of the Kennebec they did not dispute, but "were sure nothing had been sold on the east side." But the forts, which the English had built, were the chief grievance; and the Governor's explanation, that these were meant for the protection of both parties, they did not well understand. The interview was displeas-

ing to them. They withdrew abruptly without taking leave, threw their English flag upon the ground, and returned to their own quarters.

In the evening they came again, and brought a letter from Rale, "dated the 17th of August, 1717."\* In this letter Rale stated, that when Vaudreuil, Governor of Canada, was in France, he inquired of the French King whether, in any treaty, he had given the Indian lands to the English, and that the King affirmed he had not, but was ready to protect the Indians against encroachments. Governor Shute read the letter, and rejected it as unworthy of regard. Hutchinson adds, "He let them know that he highly resented the insolence of the Jesuit."† If he did so, I confess my inability to see any insolence, or even impropriety, on the part of Rale in this case. He was the friend and adviser of the Indians. As such, he was authorized and required to write on their behalf; and his state-

---

\* This date is evidently a mistake, since the conference was concluded on the 12th of August. If, as I suppose, Rale was with the Indians at their quarters, the letter was probably written on the 10th of August, just before it was delivered. If he was not there, they must have brought the letter with them from Norridgewock, to be used if it should be wanted. In either case, the date is equally an error.

† Nothing like this is said in the original tract, "Treaty of 1717," &c. See *N. H. Hist. Coll.* Vol. II. p. 252.

ment was such as might be expected from one, who put the French construction on the question of these conflicting claims.

The next day, August 11th, Governor Shute ordered his vessel to be prepared for sailing. "He was resolved," says Baxter, in his Journal, "not to buckle to them, and went aboard and acted as if he were going away." The Indians, perceiving this, hastened to send a canoe with two of their number to make a submissive acknowledgment, and to request another interview. The Governor consented, only on the condition that they would at once abandon their pretensions about the English lands, and accept his proposals. Their English flag was, at their own request, returned to them; and the parties entered upon another conference. After an apology for what they called "our rude carriage of yesterday," the Indians manifested a very complying temper. Agreeably to their desire, the Governor stipulated that they should be supplied with two or three "trading houses" to furnish them commodities at reasonable rates, and with a smith "to mend their guns." On the following day, the treaty made at Portsmouth in July, 1713, was in due form renewed, the natives agreeing that the English, whom they styled "our good fellow-subjects," shall continue to hold and improve all the lands they had for-

merly possessed, or to which they had obtained a right and title, "hoping," as it was expressed, "it will prove of mutual and reciprocal benefit and advantage to them and us, that they cohabit with us." Tokens of friendship were exchanged, and thus the conference ended.\*

The minds of these freemen of nature were evidently entangled and confused by the strife between their civilized neighbors about religion

---

\* Chalmers, in the second volume of his recently published History, has accompanied his notice of the conference at Georgetown with the following remarks. "The progress of the treaty evinced the inferiority of Shute to those, who were denominated savages, in the essential qualities of the man, in vigor of sentiment, in force of eloquence, in politeness of manners; because he constantly interrupted their orators, while they listened patiently to him. He offered them a Bible with the same hand where-with he grasped their lands. In vain they pleaded for their native possessions and their independence, on which they saw daily encroachments, because avarice absorbs every other passion. They retired in disgust. And, though fearful of immediate warfare, since they distrusted the French as well as the English, they apologized for their abruptness of departure, and sought for reconciliation. They finally went away with a determination to defend that by force, which interestedness had denied to their entreaties." I know not on what evidence the historian asserts that Shute interrupted the Indian speakers and treated them uncivilly; I have found no such statement elsewhere. Chalmers's description of the feelings of the Indians on this occasion, I suppose, represents the truth of the case.

and for power. Questions arose, which they neither cared for nor understood. They wished to enjoy, as they had done, the freedom of the wilderness; and the assiduous, kind, self-denying labors of the French priests had won their affections. Under these influences, it is not surprising, that they forgot or disregarded treaties, when provoked by some present wrong, or made to feel, by those who watched for their interest, that injury was designed. The engagement they had just entered into seemed to promise lasting peace. Was it wholly the fault of the Indians and Jesuits, that the promise was in a year or two disappointed? Did not the thirst for gain, unrestrained by public authority, often abuse the ignorance, or take advantage of the wants or passions, of these children of the forest? and would not their French friends see and tell of this? Was Massachusetts, on her side, faithful to the bond? She stipulated to provide the Indians with certain conveniences, such as trading houses and locksmiths, but failed to make good the promise.

It is a poor apology that, as we are told, the contentions which came on between the Governor and Assembly of Massachusetts prevented a fulfilment of the obligation. Could the Indians, who had given up so much, be expected to wait in patient apathy, while their dues were for-

gotten amidst the quarrels of politicians? Dr. Belknap has well remarked, that Shute would have rendered better service, and perhaps foreclosed a war, if, instead of formally offering them an Indian Bible and a Protestant missionary, he had complied with their earnest desire to fix a boundary, beyond which the English should not extend their settlements.

The Reverend Joseph Baxter, whose name occurs in the account of the Georgetown conference, was left there by Governor Shute, with the hope, that, as a missionary and a school-master, he might create among the natives an interest on behalf of the Protestant faith.\* It may easily be supposed, that Rale watched his motions with the quick and jealous eye of a Jesuit priest. His own account of the matter glows with the confidence of a victorious champion of the church. "Some years ago," says he, writing in 1722, "the Governor of New England sent to the mouth of our river the most skilful among the ministers of Boston,† to keep

---

\* He was minister of Medfield, Massachusetts, a graduate of Harvard College in 1693, and a man of reputation in the ministry and in the colony. He is said to have been of the family of Richard Baxter, the celebrated English divine.

† Baxter was of Medfield. But the French frequently spoke of all Massachusetts, or at least of a large region

a school for the children of the Indians, and to take care of them at the expense of his government." This minister, according to Rale, did all he could, by presents and arts of endearment, to win the natives and their little ones, but without gaining even a single child. He next assailed the religion of the Indians. He put various questions concerning their faith; and as they answered, he turned into ridicule the sacraments, purgatory, the invocation of saints, beads, crosses, images, and the other parts of the Catholic creed and ritual.

Rale felt it to be his duty to crush these first seeds of heretical seduction. "I wrote," says he, "a respectful letter to the minister, in which I signified to him, that my Christian flock knew how to believe the truths taught by the Catholic faith, but not how to dispute about them." Supposing that the suggestions made to them were in fact intended to reach his own ear, he offered to confer with Mr. Baxter on the subject, either by conversation or by letters, and sent him at that time an Essay, which he begged him to read with serious attention.

"In this Essay, of about a hundred pages," says the prompt and sturdy polemic, "I proved

---

about the metropolis, as *Boston*. Rale, in the preceding lines, makes the mistake also of calling the Governor of *Massachusetts* the Governor of *New England*.



by Scripture, by tradition, and by theological arguments, the truths which he had attacked with an abundance of stale jests. I told him, at the close of my letter, that if he was not satisfied with my reasoning, I should expect from him are futation marked with precision, and resting on reasons worthy of theological science. In two days after receiving my letter, he set out on his return to Boston, and sent me a brief answer, which I was obliged to read several times before I could understand it, so obscure was the style, and so strange was the Latin. By dint of musing upon it, I was able to comprehend, that he complained of being attacked without reason; that zeal for the salvation of souls had led him to teach the way of heaven to the Indians; and that he considered my arguments silly and childish. Having sent him a second letter at Boston, in which I exposed the defects of his, he answered me at the end of two years, without entering into the subject at all, but charging me with a bitter and censorious spirit, the sure mark, he said, of an irascible temperament. Thus ended our dispute, which drove away the minister, and baffled his plan of seducing my neophytes.” \*

It would be well now if we could give Mr.

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Vol. XVII. pp. 299-303.

Baxter's version of the affair. But, if he left any account of the correspondence and of his own action in the matter, I have not been able to find it. Nothing is more common and easy than for a valiant polemic to be sure, as Rale was, that all the argument and decency are on his side, and all the weakness and railing on the side of his antagonist. The priest, amidst his solitary and devoted labors, we may suppose, was not free from the pride of sectarian confidence. The loss of Rale's Essay of a hundred pages is to be regretted.\* Were we in possession of this and of

---

\* I am here reminded of another elaborate polemical epistle, in Latin, which is preserved among the ancient papers at the State House in Boston, and may be found in the volume marked *Letters*, l. 1692-1724. It was written in October, 1700, by V. Bigot, a Jesuit priest, one of Rale's fellow-laborers. Bigot wrote to Governor Bellamont, asking permission to correspond with a friend of his, named George Turfrey, and enclosing a Latin letter of nearly six long pages, which he requests the Governor to read before he sends it to Turfrey, since he might perhaps discover from it, that the odious priests were men of a much better and more pious character than he had supposed. The letter to Turfrey, which I suppose was intended full as much for the Governor's edification or conversion, is mainly a warm attack upon the Protestant faith, and an earnest defence of Romanism. Bigot's friend, it seems, was a Protestant; and Bigot, anxious for his conversion, tells him of the vanity of his religion, (*inanitatem vestræ religionis*,) assures him that he is undone unless he provides for his salvation by coming into the true church,

Baxter's statements, some judgment might be formed of the merits of the controversy.

The Latin correspondence between Rale and Baxter consisted, it would seem, of two epistles on each side. Of these four papers, I have seen only one, a letter from Baxter to Rale, in a mutilated condition. This was written apparently in April, 1719, and was, I suppose, the second of Baxter's letters.\* It affords an amusing specimen of the manner, in which these grave divines warmed themselves into an acrimonious dispute about the purity and correctness of each other's Latin. Rale, it would seem, had criticised the style of his opponent's previous letter (the one which, he says, he found so much difficulty in

---

(actum enim verò de te est, nisi tuæ prospicias salutem,) and exclaims, with the confidence of infallibility, "quousque inani religionis vanissimæ figmento vos ipsi aut deluditis, aut deludi certè patimini." The writer speaks respectfully and courteously of the Governor, whose ear, he says, had been poisoned by malicious tale-bearers. It was about this time that the government of Massachusetts took severe measures against the Jesuits.

\* For this letter I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Daniel Adams, of Medfield, into whose possession it came by means of his connection with the Baxter family. Whether it was a copy kept by Mr. Baxter, or was sent back to him after Rale's papers were seized, I do not know. Parts of the last two pages are wanting. Mr. Adams has favored the Massachusetts Historical Society by placing the original letter among their papers.

understanding) with no little severity. He had found fault with *amicus*, used as an adjective instead of a substantive; with *merere*, which should have been the deponent *mereri*; with *mola*, in the sense of *mill* instead of *millstone*; with *domus* for the accusative plural, which, the critic asserted, should be *domos*, and the like. On all these weighty points, the respondent meets him with a stout defence, and then, retorting the charge, turns the edge of the critical knife upon Rale's own style.

Baxter's epistle is certainly not one of the choicest specimens of classical elegance; but he sometimes puts his adversary in the wrong. He charges him, as disputants are wont reciprocally to do, with bad temper. The latter part of the letter is occupied in repelling some accusations of improper interference with the Indians, and apparently with argumentative discussion. It furnishes one fact in Rale's history, which I have not met anywhere else, that he was, or claimed to have been, while in France, a professor of rhetoric and of Greek at Nismes.

What success Mr. Baxter found in his missionary labors, I know not that we can ascertain. It could not amount to much; for, besides the inherent difficulty of presenting instruction and religion to the Indian mind, except by long years of patient, persevering labor, what interest the natives had in these matters was already pre-

occupied by their attachment to the French priests. Yet, during his short stay, he excited a degree of interest, and was listened to with favor by some.\*

Besides the correspondence with Baxter, it has been commonly stated that Rale wrote to some of the ministers of Boston in Latin. In the "Common-place Book" of the Reverend Henry Flynt, or Tutor Flynt, as he is sometimes called on account of his connection with Harvard College, a document occurs, which is considered as a translation of one of these letters.† Nothing

---

\* The evidence of this I find among the papers in the State House. In the volume marked *Indian*, II. 1705-1750, there is the following petition to the "Great Governor at Boston."

"We, Indian chiefs belonging to Pejepscot River, whose names are under written, desire that Mr. Baxter may be at Pejepscot when there is an interpreter, for he is a very good man; we heard him speak well; and we desire that the Great Governor and Council would order a small praying house to be built near the Fort, for the English and us to meet in on Sabbath days."

This is dated, "Fort George, at Brunswick, Oct. 3, 1717," and signed by three chiefs with their respective marks affixed, and by "John Gyles, interpreter."

† Dr. Harris speaks of it as such in his "Memoir of Father Rasles," *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII. p. 253. Flynt's Common-place Book is preserved among the manuscripts of the Mass. Hist. Society. He was present at the Georgetown conference.

is stated to designate it as a letter sent to a minister, or to ministers, of Boston; but very probably it was such. It is entitled "Remarks out of the Fryar Sebastian Rale's Letter from Narridgwock, February 7, 1720." Flynt seems to have recorded what he considered the substance of it generally in Rale's words. It is a curious paper, and affords evidence of excited feeling and resolute defiance on the part of the writer, not unmingled with a tone of arrogance which must have provoked indignation. Thus, having spoken of his determination, in a certain case, to expel or suspend some Indians from the church, he adds, "You must know a missionary is not a cipher, like a minister;" and again, with somewhat of the braggart dignity of a churchman, he says, "A Jesuit is not a Baxter, or a Boston minister."

Much of the letter is taken up with a protest against English encroachments on Indian lands, the sore complaint which ever recurs through the whole of this unhappy strife. "The English," says Rale, "tell the natives, We have bought of the ancient Indians such and such lands. I tell them it was after this manner; the Englishman offers a bottle of rum for such a tract of land; the Indians agree; the Englishman asks the Indian's name and writes it down; and so the bargain is made and shown, to delude the

eyes of the Indians. The Indian, and the English too, know this is not buying." \*

He argues that these lands were inalienable, and that the sachems could not dispose of what they had merely in trust. "By the laws of all kingdoms," says he, "the guardians of pupils cannot sell or alienate the estates of the pupils. I say thus to the Indians; You are masters of the land which God has given you to live on; though the English should give all their treasures, they cannot buy it, because the children, whose

\* Whittier describes strikingly a similar transaction between John Bonython (the white man, who had the burlesque title of "Sagamore of Saco") and Mogg Megone.

"From Sagamore Bonython's hunting flask

The fire-water burns at the lip of Megone;

'Will the sachem hear what his father shall ask?

Will he make his mark, that it may be known,  
On the speaking leaf, that he gives the land,  
From the sachem's own, to his father's hand?'

"The fire-water shines in the Indian's eyes,

As he rises the white man's bidding to do;

'Wuttamuttata; weekan!\* Mogg is wise,

For the water he drinks is strong and new;  
Mogg's heart is great! will he shut his hand,  
When his father asks for a little land?'

"With unsteady fingers, the Indian has drawn

On the parchment, the shape of a hunter's bow;

'Boon water, boon water, Sagamore John!

Wuttamuttata; weekan! our hearts will grow!''

\* That is, "Let us drink; it is sweet."

guardians you are, will forever reënter into their estates. This is a law established all the world over." This fallacious argument would be readily applied by the natives to set aside a bargain, which was believed to be unjust in its terms, or inconvenient in its consequences. Rale affirms that the treaty at Arrowsick was not admitted at Norridgwock, and that the Mohawks, the Algonquins, and the Hurons, sent messengers to that village to express their dissent from it. When a sachem said to the Governor, "Thou shalt not go beyond that mill which we see from hence, and among the habitations thou shalt build no fort," he represents the Governor as replying, "I will build a hundred, if I please." He finds great fault with the interpreters. "You have not one," says he, "that can explain faithfully in the Indian language; they speak nothing but gibberish."

Alluding to the attempts to have him displaced from his mission, Rale observes, that should they be successful, the effect, so far as he was concerned, would only be to relieve him from the suffering to which he had devoted himself upon coming among the Indians; but, he adds, happily applying Virgil's lines slightly altered, "upon my quitting my mission, it may happen,

— 'deficiente uno, non deficit alter  
Aureus; et simili frondescit virga metallo.'



Recurring to the alleged inroads upon the Indian lands, he has the following noteworthy statement; "I am actually composing an ample writing about these things, to send to the King of France, that he may see what I do to preserve my Indians in their lands and prayer. The King's design was repeated to me by Monsieur Vaudreuil last fall, and three years before, that I should assist the Indians to preserve their lands and prayer. To move me, he has assigned me a considerable pension of six thousand francs, till my death; all this goes away in good works. This, I suppose, comes because the Governor [of Massachusetts] has threatened he will have me taken up, or cause me to quit, by writing to his King against me. The Indians told it to Monsieur Vaudreuil, who wrote it to the [French] court; since which I am more and more strengthened here. I will cause my book to be printed and presented to the King and the public, that it may be seen what I do for my children. They are cheated, driven from their lands and prayer; and shall not I counsel and defend them? They shall sooner take away my life, than hinder me. The book shall be embellished with figures of rhetoric, epigrams, and poetry. I will describe how the English treat the Indian, killing him and his

dogs, dearer to him than their oxen;\* how they would govern him, taking possession of the Indian's land without his consent, to their own great profit; and when he says to the Englishman, Why do you thus? the answer is, You offend me; your father bids you say this."†

The promised book, I suppose, was never published; for, from this time, Rale, who soon found himself compelled to take his life in his hand wherever he was or went, must have been engrossed with other cares than those of writing and printing. The pension, of which he speaks, and which he affirms was all spent in "good works," would be interpreted on the other side as a *douceur* for unceasing hostility to the English, and for promoting the plans of the French government.

The General Court of Massachusetts took measures, at different times, to supply the eastern Indians with Protestant missionaries. Resolves for this purpose were passed in 1717 and 1720, offering a salary of one hundred

---

\* That is, to the Indian his dogs are dearer, than to the Englishman are his oxen, the killing of which by the natives was a frequent ground of complaint.

† Flynt marks the above letter as "transcribed May 3, 1720."

and fifty pounds a year to any minister, who would reside at Fort George, acquire the language of the natives, and instruct them in religion. Samuel Moody (the minister of York, in Maine, I suppose) was chosen for that work ; \* but whether he accepted the office, and entered upon its duties, I have not been able to ascertain. Charlevoix mentions with indignation a proposal to do the same thing among the Indians of New York. Bellamont, Governor of that province in 1698, promised, at the request of the natives, to send Protestant ministers to teach them the Christian religion.† The New England people of course had the same right as the French, to employ their missionaries among these children of the wilderness. But it is easy to conceive how the zealous spirit of Rale and his associates must be vexed by such a proceeding. They must feel as the venerable Eliot would, had Romish priests been stationed among or near his beloved Indian church at Natick.

It was probably in accordance with the above-mentioned resolves of the Massachusetts government, that the Reverend Mr. Baxter, after his return from his first excursion with Governor Shute, twice revisited the eastern Indians ; once

---

\* Felt's *Annals of Salem*, p. 372.

† *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XVII.

in the winter of 1717-18, and again in August and September of 1721. His Journal affords brief notices of these visits, as well as of the former one. The following extracts contain interesting statements with reference to Rale and his agency among the natives.

*October 6th, 1717.* "We heard, by the Indians, of terrible fires beyond Canada, whereby many of the Indians were destroyed; and many, being terrified, fled from the places where they used to dwell; and we had an account of about fourscore strange Indians, that were come to Penecook with their families, who said that they fled for fear of the fire; but it was suspected that they were come from Carolina. The Indians said, that the Jesuit told them that the world is now to be gradually destroyed by fire, and that the fire would come to them by Christmas."

*October 27th, 1717.* "I preached at Georgetown. Here I had an account, from Captain Giles, of his being informed by the Indians that the Jesuit had predicted that the world would soon come to an end, and that it would be in forty-nine days."

*January 26th, 1717-18.* "Captain Giles said that he had information, that on December 14th, being the Romish Christmas, there was a meeting of the Indians, near a hundred of them, at Pemaquid; and when they were come together,

the young men were for promoting a war with the English, saying, 'We are now certainly informed that the English have killed us a man; they are grown proud; let us make war with them immediately.' The old men and the wise men said, 'You are foolish children; if you do so, you will do the devil's work, and the devil will take you. It is not according to our promise to Governor Shute; we have an old man near the fort at Pejepscot, (naming Terramuggus,) and he hath a friend there that will tell him the truth; we will first hear their say; our eyes are on them.' After their discourse, the young men hearkened to the old men, and are now easy, and every man to his hunting."

Under the same date with the last, it is stated that Vaudreuil, Governor of Canada, had written to the Penobscot and St. John's Indians, to hinder the English from settling, or drive them off, with the promise of assistance, if necessary. "As to the Kennebec Indians," says he, "I leave them to work their ruin." Vaudreuil here probably refers to the displeasure he felt at the pacific negotiation with Shute.

*April 23d, 1718.* "I discoursed with three Indians. One of them gave an account of an apparition that the Jesuit at Norridgwock saw, who, lying alone in his wigwam, awaked in the night, and saw a great light, as if his wig-

wam had been on fire ; whereupon he got up and went abroad, and after some time he returned to his wigwam, and went to sleep again ; and after a while he awaked, and felt as it were a hand upon his throat, that almost choked him, and saw a great light again, and heard a voice saying, ‘It is in vain for you to take any pains with these Indians, your children, for I have got possession of them, and will keep possession of them.’ The Jesuit likewise said, that there was a letter brought to him, which was written in the name of an Indian that was dead, wherein he declared that he was now burning in a most horrible fire. He showed this letter to the Indians ; but first tore off the name that was subscribed, and did not let them know who he was. The letter was written in the Indian tongue. This apparition, he said, was about forty days ago.”

*August 14th, 1721.* “Block-house, St. George’s River. There came to us two Indians. Captain Westbrook showed them the letter, which was sent to our Governor by the Jesuit, and told them that he wrote in the names of all the Indians, and how insultingly he wrote, and threatened to burn the Englishmen’s houses ; whereupon they said that Patrahans, that is, the Jesuit, lied, and he was very wicked, and that they desired always to live in friendship and brotherhood with the English.”

During Baxter's intercourse with the Indians, he preached and conversed with them about religion, much to their acceptance, as he affirms.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Rale's Letters to the Governors of Massachusetts. — Shute's Reply. — Hostile Disposition of the Indians. — Indignation of the People and Government of Massachusetts against Rale. — Choice of a new Chief among the Abnakis. — Difficulty and Irritation about Indian Hostages. — Letter from the Eastern Tribes to Governor Shute. — Letter from Vaudreuil to Rale.*

THE epistolary correspondence of Rale was not limited to the clergy. He addressed the Governors of Massachusetts in strong terms, on the matters in debate. To Dudley he communicated his views on what he deemed the aggressions upon Indian property, without receiving an answer.\* In August, 1717, he wrote an elaborate letter to Shute. Neither of these, I believe, is now to be found. But to the latter we

---

\* Flynt's *Common-place Book*.

find a carefully prepared answer, by Governor Shute;\* and, judging from the answer, Rale's letter must have been of a bold, earnest, and perhaps caustic character.

Shute laid this letter before the General Assembly of the province. His reply deals very strongly and plainly with the priest's statements. Rale had professed himself a lover of peace, adding the remark, "*Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine.*" Shute rejoins, "I suppose you mean *vera ecclesia*, the church of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; for otherwise we read in the Revelation of a false church, or spiritual Babylon, who was drunk with the blood of the saints, and of the martyrs of Jesus." He expresses great surprise at the Jesuit's treatment of Mr. Baxter, remarking that, not having seen their correspondence, he cannot judge of the merits of the Latin on each side; but that, at any rate, classical skill is not the main qualification for a gospel minister among the Indians.

As Rale had accused Baxter of ridiculing the holy things of the Catholic religion, so Shute charges Rale with pouring contempt upon Baxter's mission, when he ought to have welcomed

---

\* Mass. Hist. Coll. 1st Series, Vol. V. pp. 112-191.



him as a fellow-laborer in the work of the Lord. The Governor expresses the most resolute determination to maintain the claims of the English to their eastern lands, which he regards as lawfully obtained at first, and solemnly secured by the Arrowsick treaty; while he likewise pledges himself to guard the rights of the Indians with scrupulous exactness. The corruption of the natives by strong drink he deplores as deeply as Rale, protesting that the government of Massachusetts had done all in their power to prevent this iniquity, and to punish it when detected.\* He affirms that sixty years' experience had taught the English they might live in perfect amity with the natives, but for the instigation of the French, and especially of "the Popish missionaries," and expresses his astonishment at warlike symptoms in the plantations, while there exists perfect peace between the two crowns in Europe.

The hostile intimations, of which the Governor speaks, appeared from time to time in a dangerous restlessness, and occasional outbreaks of violence, among the Indians. The particulars may be found in the histories of those times.

---

\* Yet, in the letter in Flynt's Common-place Book, Rale still asserts, that while the French government had imposed heavy fines, chains, and whipping, upon "the traders in brandy" among the Indians, there was "no justice among the English" on this subject, "even under this Governor."

The Abnakis were the chief actors in these troubles; and the general indignation of Massachusetts against the French and their missionaries, now concentrated itself upon Rale. The agents and officers of the provincial government inferred, from all they could learn, that the subtle, restless influence of this priest was the mainspring of the whole evil. But for him, the English might live in peace and good neighborhood with the natives.

Joseph Heath and John Minot, writing to the Governor, on the 1st of May, 1719, referring to a conference they had held with "the Jesuit," proceed to state, that they had repeated what he said to the principal Indians, who thereupon affirmed "the Jesuit had told them wrong stories;" they repudiated his statements, saying "that he spoke his mind, not theirs;" that they had not authorized him to write letters on their behalf, and that the letters he sent at any time were to be regarded as his own, not as theirs. Heath and Minot add, "It is our humble opinion, that the friar is an incendiary of mischief among these Indians, and that, were it not for his pernicious suggestions, your Excellency would not meet with any trouble from them." Such was the general belief of the country. Yet these very Indians, who thus disclaimed all sympathy with Rale, would, the next

week, perhaps, be foremost to listen to his suggestions and defend his statements. So fickle and impulsive was the character of these wild men. Rale himself complains of their utter unsteadiness.

We find him still employed, at times, in writing letters to the Governor on French and Indian affairs.\* His agency was visible in other forms. The popular feeling against him ran high, and clamored for his person, if not for his life. At the meeting of the General Court in November, 1720, a resolve passed the House, expressive of this feeling. It was ordered, that one hundred and fifty men, under the command of Colonel Walton, should march to Norridgewock and enforce amends from the Indians for their depredations upon the cattle and other property of the English settlers. A warrant was to be issued to the high sheriff of the county of York, John Leighton, to join the expedition, with authority to seize upon Rale and bring him to Boston. If the priest could not be found, his Indians must be required to surrender him; should they refuse, they themselves were to be arrested and taken to Boston.

---

\* Not the letters themselves, but evidence that such were sent, we find occasionally among the documents in the State House; as in the volume marked *Letters*, I. 1692-1724, pp. 316, 318.

But the other branches of the government thought the House more zealous than wise in this matter. When the resolve came before the Council, who desired peace, they rejected it; and the Governor, on his part, regarded it as amounting to a declaration of war, and "an invasion of the prerogative," to use the expression of Hutchinson, who thinks the House would have been glad to seize upon this opportunity of extirpating or subduing the Indians, when the French, on account of the peace between the two crowns, would not dare to interpose for their assistance. A further reason for quashing this resolve was, that it would defeat the plan, which had been proposed, of holding a meeting with the Indians for a treaty.

Rale, if he reasoned justly, could not be surprised at this state of public sentiment. He had made no secret of exerting an influence, which, however conscientious on his part, must be regarded by the Massachusetts people as a malignant machination against their property and their lives. Besides the declarations in his printed letters, we learn from the letter preserved by Flynt, that he set forth a somewhat boastful display of his power over the natives, apparently to make himself formidable.

"The Indians," says he, "hold no council without calling me to it. When they have de-

liberated, they ask my thoughts. If I approve, I say, 'That is well ; if not, I say so, and give my reasons, for we must give them reasons. Well, say they, let it be as our father says. Any treaty with the Governor, particularly that of Arrowsick, is null, if I do not approve it; for I bring them so many reasons against it, that they absolutely condemn what they have done. The Indians will, that presently and absolutely those settled on the river should quit it, because I have shown them evidently, that if they did not make them retire, they would lose their lands, and, by a greater misfortune, their prayers ; adding that if they did not do it, I would go away from them. I say then that from the mill on this side, I will not that there shall remain so much as one habitation. I cannot by my character, (that is, as a priest,) carry them forth to war. I can absolutely hinder them, when they have not solid reasons for it ; but when they have any, I shall not hinder them ; as, for instance, to preserve their lands whereon depend their prayers, or for any considerable wrong done to them ; in these cases, I will tell them they may make war."

Such words, though written in the zeal of honest conviction, must have sunk deeply into the irritated minds of the New England people. The priest seemed to invite their indignation to

himself, as to a prominent mark. Further, they believed him to be an instrument in the hands of the Governor of Canada, ready for any atrocity he might prescribe. The French Governor's agency will presently appear more plainly. But, in December, 1718, John Gyles, an interpreter between the Indians and the whites, writing to Governor Shute from Fort George,\* speaks of a letter from Vaudreuil "to the friar," received at Norridgwock, which advised the priest by all means to hinder the English settlements. When the letter was made known to the Indians, they wished that Vaudreuil might be requested to beg his King to prevent the settlements, "though," they added, "we did tell the English to come half way from Sagadahock to Norridgwock."

From the English point of view, all this must have been regarded as in the highest degree vexatious and insulting. The lands on which the Indian tribes lived being included within the patents granted by the crown of England, they were regarded and treated as subjects of the British King. The Massachusetts government, while they acknowledged that individuals had wronged the natives by fraudulent and friv-

---

\* Documents in the State House. *Letters*, I. 1692 - 1724, p. 304.

olous bargains, still maintained that the claim it wished to make good was founded on a valid, legal basis. Its relation to the Indians had been established by solemn treaties, in which they voluntarily took the character of subjects of Great Britain, and guarantied to the English the possession of their lands.\* Of course, the people of New England could regard the exciting action of the Jesuits and of the French only as a faithless invasion of stipulated rights, a malicious attack upon their safety and peace.

The French argument took a different course, denying the premises and the inferences of their opponents. The two parties stood at points of view, between which there could scarcely be any connection but that of irritation and defiance, made more keen by an ancient inherited opposition of national and religious feeling. I find no good evidence, that Rale used his power, as the confidential adviser of the Indians, to promote wanton and bloody outrage, or to incite unprovoked invasion of the property and lives of the English. We may admit, that what he did he believed it his duty to do, as a

---

\* Yet Hutchinson remarks, "If a view be taken of all the transactions between the English and them from the beginning, it will be difficult to say what sort of subjects they were, and it is not certain that they understood that they had promised any subjection at all." Vol. II. p. 270.

Frenchman and a servant of his church. But he must have strangely miscalculated the action of human feelings, if he supposed he could take the position and use the language, which he did, without drawing upon his head the vengeance of a whole community. "They knew," said he, very truly, "that in maintaining the attachment of my Indians to the Catholic faith, I strengthen more and more the ties which unite them to the French." He had assumed an agency, the consequences of which he must foresee and be prepared to meet.

Notwithstanding the warlike aspect of affairs, it was well known to the English, that there existed among the Indians a strong party desirous of peace. A hope appeared, that this disposition might be matured into thorough amity. Toxus, a chief of the Abnakis, having died, a numerous meeting was convened at Norridgwock to choose a successor. The pacific party prevailed, and raised to the vacant office Ouikouiroumenit, a decided advocate of peace. The amicable tendency was carried so far, that, in a conference of the sagamores with the English, a promise was given to consult upon making satisfaction for the recent depredations committed by the Indians. A quantity of beaver, with the promise of more, was given; and four hostages were sent to Boston as securities for the



future good behavior of the tribe, and for compensating the injuries sustained by the settlers.

Rale, not a little chagrined at these proceedings, hastened to make them known to the Governor of Canada. Vaudreuil's letter to Rale on the 15th of June, 1721, showed how deeply he was incensed by the pacific and yielding disposition of the Abnakis. He deplored their choice of such a chief, and spoke with alarm of "the faint hearts of the Indians in giving hostages to the English, to secure payment of the damage they had sustained." He thought the crisis called for a vigorous rally, and prevailed upon the Indians of St. François and Beçancour to come to the aid of the languishing zeal of those of Norridgwock, by sending deputies to let the English see that other tribes were interested in this matter. Begoir, the Intendant of Canada, also wrote a letter of encouragement and excitement to Rale, telling him that, as there could be no objection raised against the visit of one missionary to another, they had concluded to send to his aid the Father de la Chasse, instead of a military man; yet he adds, in a postscript, that, by the desire of the Indians, the Lieutenant de Croisel would accompany the father.\*

---

\* Hutchinson, Vol. II. p. 262. Williamson's *Maine*, Vol. II. p. 105.

But this affair of the hostages stands very differently in Rale's account. He relates that some twenty of the Indians, having entered one of the English houses to trade, or merely to rest a while, had been there but a short time, when the house was surrounded by a troop of nearly two hundred men, who pacified the Indians, furious at being thus treacherously surprised, by assuring them that they meant no harm, that they had come only to invite some of them to repair to Boston, in order to confer with the Governor on the means of establishing peace and a good understanding between themselves and the English. The Indians, always too credulous, delegated four of their number for the purpose, who, when they arrived at Boston, instead of a conference, found themselves prisoners. The Abnakis, when they heard of the treatment of their countrymen at Boston, complained bitterly of this violation of the laws of nations in a season of peace. The English replied, that they detained these men only as hostages on account of the wrong they had suffered by the killing of their cattle, and that as soon as this damage, which amounted to two hundred pounds of beaver, should be compensated, the prisoners would be released. The Abnakis refused to acknowledge the justice of the claim; but, that they might not leave their

brethren in prison, consented to pay the amount of beaver. Yet when they had done this, the prisoners were still deprived of their freedom.\*

Charlevoix repeats the same story;† and on these authorities alone, I believe, does it rest. It may be said, that the English writers would be as likely to suppress such an account, if it were true, as the French to give it currency, if it were false. But it is of some importance to observe, that the story does not agree with the character of Vaudreuil's indignant letter to Rale on the subject; for why should he reprobate so severely the cowardice of the Indians in giving hostages to the English, if they had honestly supposed that they were merely sending deputies to a conference, and that even into this they were drawn only by a treacherous surprise?

Rale and Charlevoix also state, that the Governor of Massachusetts, fearing that this base affair might involve his people in some trouble, to calm the resentment of the Indians, proposed a conference with them for an amicable adjustment of difficulties; but that when the natives, with their French friends, assembled at the time and place assigned, the Governor, to their surprise, failed to appear. Neither the proposal,

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. pp. 306, 309.

† *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XIX.

nor the failure, so far as I know, is mentioned by any other writer.

This matter of the hostages aggravated the general irritation. The Indians seem to have understood that their four countrymen were to be ransomed by a certain amount of beaver.\* Captain Samuel Moody, in two letters written in June, 1721, informs Governor Shute that an answer to the demand of the government upon the Abnakis to dismiss "the Jesuit," had been

---

\* Flynt, in his *Common-place Book*, gives an account of this transaction, by which it appears to have been a formal and deliberate compact between Colonel Walton, Captain Moody, Harmon, and Wainwright, Commissioners on the part of Massachusetts, and certain Indian chiefs. "The Indians present," says Flynt, "signed an obligation witnessed, containing an acknowledgment that the Indians had killed creatures and disturbed settlements, contrary to former covenants, and engaged to pay the Commissioners two hundred beaver skins within twenty-five days, and also to deliver four hostages for security of said payment, to be subsisted at the charge of the Indians, or a greater number, if the government demanded it, to be delivered to the English, and to remain as a security for the Indians' good behavior in time to come. Which instrument was several times distinctly interpreted, and the Indians declared they understood it, and accordingly signed, sealed, and delivered it to the Commissioners." It will be seen, how much this statement differs from that of *Rale* and *Charlevoix*. Flynt was living at the time, as well as they; and his testimony is entitled to as much credit, at least, as theirs. He says the conference was held on the 25th of November, 1720.

waited for, but not received, and that he understood "they charged the government with folly in making new demands," while the other matter remained unsettled, referring to the redemption of the hostages. They were determined most peremptorily to claim the restoration of their men, upon the payment of the beaver skins.\*

Their uneasiness continued, and did not lack French influence to keep it alive. In July or August of 1721, Rale, La Chasse, Croisel, and the younger Castine, accompanied a large body of Indians to Georgetown. They landed on an island opposite to Arrowsick, and came to a conference with Captain Penhallow, commander of the garrison. The result was, that they left a letter to be sent to Governor Shute, in the name of the several eastern tribes. This letter, in the French language, is preserved among the papers in the State House at Boston, and has been printed.† It is remarkable, that Rale states the letter to have been written in Indian, in English, and in Latin, and the Père de la Chasse, who was acquainted with these three languages, to have been the scribe on the occasion, but says nothing of the French original. La Chasse, on the one hand, wished the Indians to know, for

---

\* Documents in the State House, *Letters*, I. 1692-1724. pp. 353, 354.

• † In Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. VIII. p. 259.

themselves, that the letter contained only what they had dictated ; and on the other, he would leave the Massachusetts people no ground to question the fidelity of the English translation.”\*

I have seen or traced no other form of the letter, than the French one above mentioned, which purports to proceed from the Abnakis and their allies, and is followed by nineteen signatures, each having its appropriate signet or symbol. It is a strong and bold remonstrance on the part of the represented tribes ; and notwithstanding the Indian “dictation” of which Rale speaks, it betrays a French hand. It repeats the charge of aggression on Indian lands,† and maintains that the English could justify their claims neither by right of conquest, nor by gift, (including treaty,) nor by purchase. It complains of the violence by which their countrymen had been compelled to leave in the hands of the English four of their number, who had been made prisoners at Boston, and of want of good faith in not restoring them upon the payment of the ransom. “We have paid the beaver skins, and yet you keep our men. By what right ?” An answer, they said, was expected in

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. p. 311.

† “Ma terre que j’ay reçu de Dieu seul, ma terre de laquelle aucun roy ny aucune puissance étrangère n’a pû, ny ne peut, disposer malgré moy.”

three weeks; if it were not received in that time, they should understand that the Governor was determined, in spite of their remonstrance, to make himself master of their lands. A threat is intimated of plundering and burning the houses built on unconceded territory.

Rale says that as the time (which, however, he states at two months) elapsed without an answer, and as the English now ceased to sell to the Abnakis powder, bullets, and provisions, as they had done before, the Indians were disposed at once to make reprisals; and that it required all the Marquis de Vaudreuil's influence over them, to induce them to suspend for some time any acts of violence. What evidence Rale found of this moderation on the part of the French governor, I know not. Certainly, it does not appear in a letter written by Vaudreuil to Rale himself, September 25th, 1721.\*

"I have a great deal of satisfaction," says Vaudreuil in that letter, "in your having found means, in concert with the reverend father superior, to reunite all the Indians in the same sentiments, and to inspire them with that resolution, with which they treated the English in their interview with them. I am also very well satisfied with the message they sent the Governor of Bos-

---

\* Papers in the State House, *Letters*, I. 1692-1724. p. 358.

ton. I am persuaded it will embarrass him, and that he will elude, as much as he can, an answer. But it is for your Indians to see what they have to do, if, after the remonstrance they gave him, he do not satisfy their demands. For me, I am of the sentiment, if they have taken a sincere resolution not to suffer the English on their land, that they ought not to suspend chasing them out as soon as possible, and by all sorts of means, seeing they do not prepare to retire of their own accord. Your people ought not to fear the want of ammunition, since I send them a sufficiency, as you may see by the memorandum enclosed ; and this I will continue with the other succors they shall want, having orders not to let them want, and even to sustain them, if the English attack them wrongfully." Vaudreuil then speaks of the degradation he intends to inflict on those Indians, who had shown any attachment to the English.

This surely is not the language of a man, who wished to check the haste, or cool the passions, of the natives. A warmer assurance of sympathy and aid, in deeds of violence, they could not desire.

The Indian hostages, we are told, escaped from the place in which they were detained, near Boston. They were soon retaken, and brought back. This helped to increase the alarms excited by



other circumstances. The Penobscot tribe, with their missionary, Father Lauverjat, had strengthened the Abnakis by their alliance. The most vigilant attention to every movement in the eastern quarter became necessary. The precise character of the compact by which the hostages were given must be understood, before we can determine whether the English were justified by the usages of nations in retaining them. If they were given merely as a pledge for the payment of the beaver, of course they should have been surrendered when the beaver was paid. If, as is alleged, they were also given "as a security for the good behavior of the Indians in time to come," the government of Massachusetts might well conceive that they were authorized and required to detain them, as long as intimations of disorder, violence, and hostility, were so apparent. Wentworth, one of the agents of the government on the eastern frontier, said, in a letter of July, 1729,\* that he thought the Indians, "instigated by the Jesuits," would make reprisals for their hostages; but, at the same time, advised that the hostages should not be surrendered.

---

\* Papers in the State House, *Letters*, I. 1692 - 1724. p. 356.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Excitement against Rale. — Seizure of Castine. — Attempt to seize Rale. — His Dictionary of the Abnaki Language, and his strong Box taken. — Account of these. — Proclamation of War by Governor Shute. — Vaudreuil's Letter. — Care of the Indians for Rale amidst his Perils. — His resolute Spirit.*

THE bitter resentment of Massachusetts gathered fast and strong around Rale and his settlement. At the close of the session of the General Court, in 1721, it was voted by the House and Council, and finally assented to by the Governor, that a body of three hundred men, under the command of Colonel Thaxter and Lieutenant Goffe, should be sent among the Indians, to demand of them the surrender of the Jesuits and other incendiaries. Upon a refusal to comply with this demand, the officers were empowered to seize Rale or any other of his order, with as many Indians as they judged necessary, and transport them to Boston. One member of the Council, Judge Sewall, protested against the measure. He not only deemed it injudicious, but had a general tenderness for all the aboriginals, because he was willing to believe

them descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. The Governor was reluctant to proceed so rashly. Circumstances enabled him to suspend the execution of the order, and it was silently laid aside.

Two acts of hostility soon occurred, which kindled afresh the anger of the Indians. One of these was the seizure of Castine the younger, so called. This man, a great favorite among the Abnakis and Penobscots, and much beloved by Rale, was the son of Baron de Castine by an Indian wife. The mixed blood of his parentage allied him closely both to the French and the natives, to whom he was still more endeared by his generous character and services. He was one of those, who had appeared with military array in the late conference at Arrowsick. Some of the Massachusetts troops, believing that he was included within the scope of their orders, captured this young officer, and sent him to Boston. Rale and Charlevoix affirm that he was basely decoyed, under the guise of a polite invitation, into the power of the English.\* At Boston he was subjected to an examination before a committee, which he sustained with a discreet and firm manliness. After being de-

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. pp. 313-316; and *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XX.

tained too long, he was dismissed. The ungenerous and unjust arrest of this young man incensed to the highest degree the countrymen of his mother, among whom he had always lived.

The other offensive act was an attempt to seize the person of Rale, whom his disciples, amidst all their unsteadiness, revered as a spiritual father, and loved as a devoted friend. The government and people of Massachusetts had come to regard him as an infamous outlaw. A resolve at length passed the General Court, by which Colonel Thomas Westbrook was ordered to proceed to the Indian settlement with a party of soldiers, and, if possible, seize upon Rale. In December or January,\* of the winter of 1721 – 22, Westbrook set forth on the expedition. It is commonly said, that he reached Norridgwock undiscovered. But, according to Rale, his approach was known soon enough to baffle his purpose.

Rale's account of the affair is too interesting to be withheld. "There were with me at the village," says he; "only a few old and infirm persons, the rest of the Indians being engaged in hunting. It seemed a favorable moment for taking me by surprise; and for this purpose

---

\* "Towards the end of January, 1722," says Rale.

a party of two hundred men was detached. Two young Abnakis, hunting near the seaboard, learned that the English had entered the river. Immediately they watched their course till within ten leagues of the village. Then, by traversing the country, they arrived in advance of the party, in season to give me warning, and to withdraw in haste the old men, the women, and the children. I had barely time to swallow the consecrated host, to pack the sacred vessels in a small chest, and secrete myself in the woods. The English reached the village towards evening. Not finding me there, they came the next day in search of me, quite to the place of my retreat. They were within musket-shot, when I discovered them. My only course was to plunge precipitately into the forest. But as, in the hurry of my flight, I had not taken my snow-shoes, and had still much weakness remaining from the effects of a fall some years before, in which my leg and thigh were broken, it was impossible for me to flee far.\* My only resource was to conceal

---

\* La Chasse, writing in 1724, relates that, nineteen years before, the right thigh and the left leg of Rale were broken at once, by a fall. The callus was so badly formed over the fracture, that it became necessary to break the left leg a second time, to restore its straightness. At the time when the most violence was used in the operation, he bore

myself behind a tree. My pursuers, taking the several paths made by the Indians when they went for wood, came within eight paces of the tree. It would seem as if they must inevitably discover me, for the trees were stripped of their leaves. But, as if repelled by an invisible hand, they all at once retraced their steps, and took the route back to the village. Thus, by the special protection of God, I escaped their hands. They plundered my church and my humble dwelling. I nearly perished of famine in the woods, and suffered excessively, before my friends in Quebec, who had heard of the calamity, could send me provisions.”\*

The same account is given by Charlevoix, who, on this, as on some other occasions, almost copies the statements of the missionary.

Rale speaks of the plunder of his church and house, without telling what was carried away. In the alarm of his flight, he had left behind his papers, in his “strong box,” as it is commonly called. Of these Westbrook’s party took

---

the pain with extraordinary firmness and wonderful tranquillity. The surgeon, M. Sarrazin, was so much astonished, that he could not refrain from saying to him, “Ah, my father, suffer at least a few groans to escape; you have occasion enough for them!”

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. pp. 317–320.

possession. The solitary priest must have felt the loss deeply.

A portion of these papers, we are told, were letters he had received from the Governor of Canada, which afforded evidence of the active part taken by Vaudreuil in stimulating the Indians to hostility, and encouraging them by promises of assistance.\* How many of these letters there were, I have not discovered. The two, which I have referred to and quoted in a preceding part of this narrative, I suppose to have been among them.

But the most valuable part of the plunder was Rale's manuscript *Dictionary of the Abnaki Language*. This dictionary, to which I have before referred, had been a favorite labor with him for many years; and the students of scientific philology will never cease to be grateful to him for the patient toil he expended on the work. The original manuscript, carefully preserved in strong binding, is now in the library of Harvard College, to which it was presented by Middlecott Cooke. It is a quarto volume,

---

\* After the death of Rale, when commissioners from Massachusetts charged Vaudreuil with exciting and assisting the Indians, it is said he affected to repel the accusation, till his letters to Rale were produced and shown, which surprised and confounded him. Williamson's *Hist. of Maine*, Vol. II. p. 133.

in Rale's own hand-writing. On the first leaf is the following note, written by him in 1691. "Il y a un an que je suis parmi les sauvages; je commence a mettre en ordre, en forme de dictionnaire, les mots que j'apprens." Below this stands a notice in English, as follows; "Taken after the fight at Norridgwock among Father Rale's papers, and given by the late Colonel Heath to Elisha Cooke, Esq." The writer of this notice mistook in supposing, as he evidently did, that the manuscript was captured after the bloody onset in which Rale was killed.

The work is divided into two parts. The first is a dictionary of the Abnaki dialect, in French and Indian, the French word or phrase being given first, and then the corresponding Indian expression, generally, though not uniformly, in distinct columns. Two hundred and five leaves, a comparatively small part of which have writing on both sides, and the remainder on one side only, make up this part. The second part has twenty-five leaves, both sides of which are generally filled with writing. It is entitled *Particulæ*, an account of the *particles*, the Indian words being placed first, and the explanations given in French or Latin.

One can scarcely look at this important manuscript, with its dingy and venerable leaves, without associations of deep interest with those



labors, and that life in the wilderness, of which it is now the only memorial. Students of the Indian dialects have most justly considered it a precious contribution to the materials of philological science. Many years ago, its value arrested the attention of that highly distinguished scholar, Mr. John Pickering, to whose studies in the philosophy of language the literary public is so deeply indebted. In 1818, he published, as an appendix to his remarks on the "Orthography of the Indian Languages of North America," an accurate account of Rale's manuscript dictionary, expressing the hope that it might as soon as possible be published.\* In this hope some of the eminent scholars of Germany, among whom was Baron William von Humboldt, heartily sympathized with him.†

The so much desired object was not effected till 1833. In that year the dictionary was printed in the first volume of the New Series of the Memoirs of the American Academy, under the care and direction of Mr. Pickering, who furnished it with an introduction and notes, which enhance its value. To Mr. Pickering's

---

\* Memoirs of the American Academy, Vol. IV. pp. 358 - 360.

† Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. X. p. 123, *note*.

persevering interest and labors, therefore, we owe it, that this very important document of Indian language is placed beyond the reach of the accidents to which manuscripts are ever liable. The press has given it into the scholar's hands, along with the kindred works of Eliot, Cotton, Zeisberger, and Heckewelder.

La Chasse speaks with admiration of Rale's facility in acquiring and skill in using the Indian tongues. There was no one dialect on the continent, he affirms, of which he had not some knowledge. Besides the Abnaki language, which for a long time he had been accustomed to speak, he was familiar with that of the Hurons, the Ottawas, and the Illinois. He turned this knowledge to good account in his different missions.\*

The language of the Abnakis has not wholly vanished. By comparisons, which have been made, of many words as now spoken by the few remaining Penobscot Indians, it appears that they are the same with those of Rale's dictionary. Governor Lincoln, of Maine, has remarked that "the Penobscot language is the same as that of the ancient Norridgwock, of which Father Rale is the only person entitled to the

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. p. 334.

honor of having preserved written specimens.”\* It is worthy of observation that some words, which the author of the dictionary has inserted as original Indian words, were undoubtedly adopted from the English, and merely modified by the Indian pronunciation. Mr. Pickering has observed, as evidence of the natives having had their first intercourse with our English ancestors, that nearly all the common foreign words adopted by them are English, and not French, such as *kaous*, cows; *manni*, money; *igriskarnar*, English corn; *kabits*, cabbage; and *pikess*, pigs; while their terms relating to religious worship are evidently taken from the language of their French Catholic teachers.†

---

\* Coll. of Maine Hist. Soc. Vol. I. p. 311. These papers of Governor Lincoln contain very interesting remarks on the Indian languages and the Catholic missions in Maine.

† Memoirs of the Am. Acad. New Series, Vol. I. p. 574. To the abovementioned Indian words derived from the English, may be added *pesouis*, the word for *cat*, corrupted from our familiar term *puss* or *pussy*. In Cotton's *Indian Vocabulary*, our word *cat* is represented in Indian by *poopohs*, formed from the English *poor puss*. *Mass. Hist. Coll.* 3d Series, Vol. II. p. 156. Governor Lincoln, however, thinks that this incorporation of terms from a foreign source was seldom admitted by the Indians. "In their long intercourse with the French and English,"

The speech of the Abnakis was a dialect of that wide-spread Indian language known by the name of the Leni-Lenápe ; the most extensively diffused, according to Mr. Duponceau, of all the aboriginal languages, eastward of the Mississippi. The dictionary of Rale has happily supplied a want, that was felt with respect to the northern portion of the region in which this tongue prevailed. Now that the strife of passion about Rale has died away in the distance of years, it is beautiful to contemplate the aid which the peaceful studies of his deep solitude have reached forth to the grateful philologists of modern times.

The "strong box," which contained his papers and inkstand, is also preserved. It is of a curious and complicated construction. In the lower part is a secret drawer or compartment, to which one unacquainted with the manner of opening it can scarcely find access without breaking the box. On the inside of the lid

---

says he, "they very rarely adopted words from either ; and even when they had no personal knowledge of the objects to be represented by vocal sounds, they preserved themselves as a distinct people, with all that pertinacity, with which they have clung to their other habits of life, and retained their own dress for thought as faithfully as they did their peculiar garb." *Coll. of Maine Hist. Soc.* Vol. I. p. 312.

are pasted two engravings, in a rude style, representing the scourging of Jesus and the crowning with thorns. This box continued in the possession of Colonel Westbrook's family. At one time it was kept in the Atheneum at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. But recently, by the kindness of R. Russell Waldron, of the United States Navy, and one of the descendants of Colonel Westbrook, it has been deposited among the antiquities of the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston.\*

The violent proceedings mentioned above awakened or sharpened the reaction of Indian hostility. Ineffectual attempts were made to soothe the irritation. A rich present to Bomaseen, intended to win the favorable influence of the old Norridgwock sachem, and an invitation to another conference, could not bend the purposes of wild men, assisted, if not goaded, by their French advisers.† The war song passed from

---

\* In Farmer and Moore's *Collections*, Vol. II. p. 108, may be found a notice of Rale's box, by Mr. Waldron.

† As far back as August, 1720, I find a letter from John Gyles, the interpreter, at Fort George, saying he had given a pass to Bomaseen to go to Boston, he having "something to say to the Governor and Council." The writer adds, "I think him to be as honest a fellow as any of them; if it might please you to show him some small kindness, it might be serviceable." Papers in the State House, *Letters*, I. 1692-1724, p. 344.

one tribe to another ; and Norridgwock, says Rale, was the rallying place of the chiefs to concert their measures. The result was, that in June, 1722, they fell upon the English at Merry-meeting Bay, and made prisoners of nine families. These were soon released, except five men retained as security for the safe return of the four hostages at Boston, and sent to Canada, where they were at length ransomed. Rale justly applauds the forbearance of the Indians on this occasion, and contrasts it with the unsparing violence of Captain Harman's party, who, soon afterwards, passing up the Kennebec, slaughtered a large number of an Indian company, whom they found by night in the helplessness of sleep. Between these two achievements, however, the Indians had made an onset on Fort George, and had burned to ashes the village of Brunswick ; circumstances, which may explain, but not justify, the sanguinary deed of Harman.

The eastern tribes, acting in concert, were evidently mustering for violence. The popular voice of Massachusetts was for an immediate declaration of war. But many men of influence in the province were made reluctant by their scruples and doubts. They remembered, that if the Indians had been false to treaties, Massachusetts had not been entirely true ; that she had not fulfilled some of her stipulated engagements ;

that individuals had still wronged the natives by fraud and extortion; and that the accursed "fire-water," though against the orders of the government, had been dealt out, to madden and delude them. But all considerations gave way to the supposed necessity of strong action; and on the 25th of July, 1722, Governor Shute issued a proclamation of war.\* In the conflict that now opened, sometimes called the "Three Years' or Lovewell's War," Rale found a bloody death.

The peace existing between England and France would not allow the Canadian government to act openly as partisans in the strife. But all the influence they could exert went to the support of the Indian cause. I have found a very strong letter † from Vaudreuil on the subject, apparently addressed to the Governor of Massachusetts, or to some one high in office, dated at Quebec, the 28th of October, 1723. He justifies the hostilities of the Abnakis, and of the other tribes, their allies, on account of encroachments on their lands; argues that the territories of the Abnakis were not within the ancient limits of Acadia ceded by the treaty of Utrecht; and that, as the 15th article of the same

---

\* The proclamation is given by Penhallow, *N. H. Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. p. 94.

† Papers in the State House, *Letters*, I. 1692-1724, p. 380.

treaty provided for the appointment of commissioners to adjust these matters, the Indians ought to remain unmolested till such commissioners had acted ; and adds, "I shall esteem you responsible for the evil treatment of the Indians. I cannot, sooner or later, hinder myself from engaging in their quarrel." Whether any notice was taken of this letter by the Massachusetts government, does not appear.

Amidst the dangers to which Rale was now exposed, he relates with grateful interest the protection he found in the kind and watchful care of his disciples. On one occasion, when he was with them on an expedition in which they were engaged in hunting, a false report reached them that the English had broken into Rale's quarters, and carried him off. Immediately they determined to rescue him, even at the cost of their lives. But previously they despatched two of their number to his quarters, to see how matters stood there. When they entered his room, they found him engaged in composing the life of some saint in the Indian language. Delighted that their father was in no danger, they said, "We were told the English had carried you off, and our warriors were going to attack the fort, where, we thought, they had doubtless imprisoned you." "My children," replied Rale, "your affectionate care of me fills my heart with joy,



because it proves your attachment to your religion. To-morrow, after mass, you shall return to undeceive our brave warriors as soon as possible, and relieve them from anxiety.”

On another similar occasion, when they were at a great distance from the village, the alarm was raised that the English were within half a day’s march of the place. The Indians hastened to Rale’s quarters, and urged him to flee for the village immediately. Ten of them accompanied him as an escort and guides. The journey was one of extreme suffering, from want of provisions, and from most painful and fatiguing difficulty of travel. After two or three days, they reached the village, where, with all possible assiduity, of which Rale gives the details, his guides provided for his comfort. Meanwhile, a new alarm occurred at the station they had left. One of the Indians there, not knowing that Rale had returned to the village, went to his quarters, and, as he was not to be found, supposed that he and his companions had been captured by some English party. He hastened to give the alarm in his own part of the encampment. On his way thither, he came to the bank of a river. There, in order to give notice of the supposed calamity, he erected a stake, and attached to it a piece of bark, from what is usually called the paper birch, on which he had

sketched with charcoal a picture of some Englishmen surrounding Father Rale, one of whom was cutting off his head.

This sort of pictorial language, the meaning of which the Indians understood as readily as we do that of letters, was frequently used by them to make known any important event. Shortly after, some of them, passing in their canoes up the river, saw the pictured bark. "There," said they, "is a writing; let us see what it tells." As soon as they had looked at it, "Ah!" they cried, "the English have killed them who were quartered with our father, and they have cut off his head." Immediately they plucked off the long hair which hung loosely over their shoulders, and sat down on the spot, motionless and silent, till the next day. This was their customary form of mourning in a season of the greatest affliction.

The next day they pursued their course, till they came within half a league of the village. There they stopped, and sent forward one of their number through the woods to the village, to see if the English were there, as they suspected, burning their fort and wigwams. "I was reciting my breviary by the river side," says Rale, "when this messenger appeared on the opposite bank. As soon as he saw me, he cried out, 'Ah! my father, how glad I am to see you!

My heart was dead, and now that I see you, it revives. The writing told us the English had cut off your head; how rejoiced I am that it told false!’ When I proposed to send a canoe to bring him across the river, ‘No,’ said he, ‘it is enough that I have seen you. I will return to tell my companions the good news, and we will soon be with you.’ Accordingly, they arrived the same day.”

In the midst of these perils, Rale says, with a martyr’s spirit, “Nothing but death shall separate me from my flock. Subdued by a sense of the dangers to which I am exposed, they sometimes urge me to retire for a while to Quebec. They tell me that if I should fall into the hands of their enemies, the least evil I can look for will be to languish out the rest of my days in cruel imprisonment. I stop their mouths with the words of the apostle, which God’s grace has engraven on my heart. I say to them, ‘Give yourselves no anxiety about me. I fear not the threats of those who hate me without cause. I count not my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord Jesus.’ ” \*

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. pp. 295–306, and Tom. XVII. p. 323. La Chasse relates, that when the Indians proposed to conduct their priest to some place of safety,

Words like these come from that which is highest, and appeal to that which is highest, in man's nature. Their spirit is represented by a poet, who, if he has erred in making the priest a faultless saint, has done it with much beauty.

“What! to gain

A few short years, (for few they are at most,)  
Should I relinquish that, to which a life  
Hath been devoted? No, it cannot be.  
The slender fabric, that with so much care  
And labor was erected, still requires  
My feeble aid; and, should I leave it now,  
Who would prevent its tottering to its fall?  
To me this blind, deluded race are precious.  
’Twas for their benefit I sought these wilds,  
And here will I remain, till hope expires.’”†

---

he replied, with indignation, “What do you think of me? Do you take me for a cowardly deserter? Alas! what would become of your religion, should I abandon you? Your salvation is dearer to me than life.” To La Chasse himself, when considerations of personal safety were suggested, he said, “God has intrusted to me this flock; I will share its fate, too happy if I may be a sacrifice for its sake.”

† Deering’s *Carabasset, a Tragedy*.

## CHAPTER X.

*Supposed Aversion of the Indians to War. — Rewards offered by the English for Rale's Person. — Captain Moulton's Expedition to Norridgwock. — The final Attack upon Norridgwock. — French and English Accounts of it. — Rale's Death. — Charges against him. — Correspondence between Dummer and Vaudreuil about him. — Monument to his Memory. — Remarks on his Character.*

IT was generally believed, by the Massachusetts people, that the Indians, especially the old men among them, were averse to the war, and that nothing but French instigation could have driven them to hostilities. Hutchinson affirms, that "Rale with difficulty prevailed upon the Norridgewocks." The French statements, on the other hand, represent the movement as a spontaneous one, and the natives as requiring restraint rather than incitement.

But, whether from their own impulse or the promptings of others, they engaged in the work of violence with zeal and with no little success. I shall speak of the war only in its relation to my subject.

In February of 1723, Captain Harman under-

took an expedition against Norridgwock, which failed in consequence of the country being flooded, and the rivers filled with broken ice, by the warm rains of some preceding weeks. He returned without meeting any Indians.

The next winter, the same thing was again attempted with more, but not with great success. Rale's person or life was the prize, which the English aimed most intently to secure. Of this he was perfectly aware. In one of his letters he says, "There is no offer or promise, which our enemies have not made to my people to induce them to deliver me up, or at least to send me away to Quebec, and take one of their ministers in my place; they have made numerous attempts to surprise and take me off; they have gone so far as to promise a thousand pounds sterling to any one, who will bring them my head."\* In another letter he remarks, that the Governor had set his head at a thousand pounds sterling; but, he adds, "I shall not part with it, nevertheless, for all the sterling money in England."†

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XXIII. p. 279.

† Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. VIII. p. 267. In the proposed, but rejected, order of the House for "seizing the Jesuit," in 1720, five hundred pounds were to be offered for his body. The Council, however, thought that two hundred pounds would be enough.

This feeling against him was at its height when Captain Moulton conducted a body of troops to Norridgwock, in the midst of winter, with the hope of seizing the priest. Rale and his people were apprized of the danger in time to make a safe retreat ; so that Moulton found a deserted village. Books and papers, we are told, were again taken away. Among these, says Penhallow, was "a vile and pernicious letter from the Governor of Quebec, directed unto the friar," urging him to stimulate the Indians against the English. Captain Moulton, with praiseworthy forbearance, suffered no injury to be done to the chapel or other buildings of the place. I know not whether it was to this that Rale alluded, when, in a letter of August, 1724, he mentions a foolish menace of retaliation ; "If they did not burn the church," said he to the Indians, "it is because I did send them word on your behalf, that if they did burn it, you should burn all their temples ; therefore there was an order to the officer not to burn any thing." \*

---

\* Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. VIII. p. 246. The letter here referred to is a very rude, and in some places nearly unintelligible translation of the French original. It purports to be "dated August 12th, 1724, the very day that Captain Harman and his men slew Mons. Ralley and a number of Indians." Who the translator was, or where he

It is said, that when the English threatened to destroy Rale, if they should capture Norridgewock, he replied, with contemptuous Spartan brevity, "*if!*" He had, with bold sincerity, staked his life in the cause to which his mission had been devoted; and the time was now at hand when he must face the fatal consequence of his pledge. Of the conduct of the expedition in which he lost his life, the French and English accounts differ perhaps not more than may be explained by the position and feelings

---

found the letter, we have no means of knowing. It is addressed, "My Reverend Father." It is chiefly occupied with Rale's remarks on the warfare in which his Indians were engaged. He speaks of their being "almost reduced to a famine, provisions being so scarce," and adds, "As for myself, through the grace of God, I have gathered in the most part of my field, and husked the same, which is now drying, for I can expect none or very little from the salvages." In other respects, it would seem, he was better supplied; for, having mentioned the wine he had received, he says, "I am very much obliged to you, my Reverend Father, for the care you take of me; you are willing I should live as a chanoine till the spring, by the plentiful supply you have sent me by Panseawen; I have yet considerable for myself for the winter. Since thou hast sent me some wine, I take a glass after my mass; but I don't find it keeps me so well as a dram of brandy. I want nothing but Spanish wine for the mass; I have enough for myself for above twelve months; therefore I pray the third time to send no more wine; I shall send for more when I want."



of the respective parties. Impartiality requires that both should be given.

Père de la Chasse and Charlevoix, the original authorities on the French side, tell the story as follows.\* On the 23d of August, (N. S.) 1724, eleven hundred men, partly English and partly Indians, marched to Norridgwock. The thick woods surrounding the village, and the improvidence of its inhabitants against surprise, concealed their approach, till it was announced by a general discharge of fire-arms, which sent their shot through and through all the wigwams. There were then but fifty warriors in the village. They seized their arms and rushed out tumultuously, not to defend the place against an enemy already in possession, but to protect the flight of their wives, old men, and children, and give them time to gain the other side of the river, which as yet was not occupied by the English.

Father Rale, apprized of the peril of his people by the shouts and the tumult, hastened forth fearlessly to present his person to the assailants, in the hope of attracting their attention to himself, and thus securing his flock at the risk of his own life.† His expectation was not dis-

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. pp. 327-332. *Nouvelle France*, Liv. XX.

† La Chasse adds, as a motive, the hope of delaying by his presence their first onset.

appointed. Scarcely had he appeared, when the English uttered a great shout, which was followed by a shower of musket shot. He fell dead near a cross, which he had planted in the middle of the village. Seven Indians, who gathered about him to make their bodies his protection, were slain by his side. Thus died this affectionate pastor, giving his life for the sheep, after a mission of thirty-seven years full of suffering.

The death of the shepherd threw the flock into utter consternation. They instantly fled, and crossed the river, some by fording, some by swimming. The enemy pursued them till they had plunged into the thickest of the woods, where they rallied to the number of a hundred and fifty. More than two thousand shots were fired upon them; yet only thirty were killed and fourteen wounded. The English, finding now no resistance, set themselves to plunder and burn the village. They fired the church, having previously profaned, in a shameful manner, the sacred vessels and the adorable body of Jesus Christ. They then withdrew with a precipitation resembling flight, as if they had been smitten with a panic.

The Indians, returning immediately\* to the

---

\* "The next day," says La Chasse.

village, made it their first care to weep over the body of their holy missionary, while their women sought herbs and plants to heal the wounded. They found their priest pierced with numerous shots, scalped, his skull dashed with the blows of hatchets, his mouth and eyes filled with mud, his legs broken, and all his limbs mangled in a hundred different ways. Thus was a priest in his mission treated, at the foot of a cross, by the very men who always painted in such exaggerated colors the inhumanity of our Indians. Yet never were Indians known to vent such fury upon the dead bodies of enemies. After his disciples had raised up,\* and frequently kissed, the precious remains of a father tenderly and so justly beloved, they buried him in the same place where, the evening before, he had celebrated the holy mysteries, the place where the altar stood, before the church was burned.

I pass now to the English account. On this side the most particular narrative is that of Hutchinson,† who gathered his information from the journal of one, and from a minute and circumstantial oral statement of another, of the leading officers engaged in the expedition. It is therefore entitled to the character of a con-

---

\* La Chasse uses the word *lavé*, washed.

† History, Vol. II. pp. 311-314.

temporaneous testimony, as well as that of La Chasse and Charlevoix. Besides this, we have the account of Penhallow,\* who was living at the time, and a brief notice in the *New England Courant*, a newspaper printed in Boston, August 24th, (O. S.) 1724, a few days after the transaction.

A force was detached, according to Hutchinson, consisting of two hundred and eight men, under the command of Captains Harman, Moulton, and Bourn, and Lieutenant Bean, who, on the 8th of August, (O. S.) 1724, left Richmond Fort on the Kennebec. Three Mohawk Indians were in the party. The next day brought them to Teconnet. Here they left forty of their men to guard the seventeen whale boats, in which they had ascended the river. The remainder of the company began their march, on the 10th, for Norridgwock. In the evening of the same day, they saw two Indian women, whom they fired upon; one, the daughter of Bomaseen, was killed; the other, his wife, was taken prisoner,†

---

\* *Indian Wars, N. H. Hist. Coll. Vol. I. p. 107.*

† Here occurs a discrepancy in the English accounts. Penhallow says, that Bomaseen himself was with these women, and that, attempting to escape, he "was shot in the river." The *N. E. Courant* says, that he was with them, but escaped, and that after this the English forces hastened the more, fearing he might frustrate their purpose by carry-

and gave them information about the state of things at Norridgwock. On the 12th, about midday, they were near the fated village. Here the troops were divided. Harman, with sixty or eighty men, filed off in the direction of the Indian cornfields, where it was supposed some of them might be found. Moulton, with the rest of the soldiers, proceeded directly to the village, which they reached at three o'clock.\* The party advanced in most cautious silence, without at first seeing one of the inhabitants. But soon one of them came out of his wigwam, and, looking around, saw the enemy close upon him. He shouted the war-whoop, and ran for his gun. The alarm rang through the village, which then consisted of about sixty fighting men, besides the aged, the women, and children.†

---

ing the news of their approach. According to Hutchinson and others, Bomaseen was found among the dead at Norridgwock after the action, which is probably the truth of the case.

\* Penhallow relates that Moulton, when he came in sight of the town with his men, "divided them into three squadrons," ordering a squadron on each wing to lie in ambush, while he marched upon the town in front, and that when the Indians betook themselves to flight, after the first fire, they fell upon the guns of the divisions that lay in ambush. Of this, Hutchinson's account, derived from Harman and Moulton, says nothing.

† Rale, in an "intercepted letter," of 1724, complains that

The warriors rushed forth to the fight, and the rest fled. Moulton, believing that the Indians, in their hurry and confusion, would overshoot, reserved the fire of his men till they had discharged their muskets. It was as he expected ; not one of the English was hurt. The fire of the company, which then followed, made havoc among the Indians, who discharged their guns once more, and then fled precipitately towards the river. Some sprang into canoes, but had no paddles ; others swam ; and a few of the tallest forded the stream, the water being about six feet deep at that time. Their pursuers hurried after them, and shot them in the water. It was believed that not more than fifty of the whole village gained the opposite bank ; and of these, some fell by the English balls before they could reach the woods.

Moulton's soldiers then returned to the village. There they found Rale firing from one of the wigwams upon a few of the English who had not joined in the pursuit. Moulton had given orders not to kill the priest. But a wound inflicted upon one of the English by Rale's fire from the wigwam, so exasperated Jaques, a

---

many of his Indians, being discouraged, had left Norridgewock to go to the villages of Canada. "They would have carried me with them," says he ; "but I bid them go ; as for me, I remain." *Mass. Hist. Coll.* Vol. VIII. p. 267.

lieutenant, that he burst the door, and shot Rale through the head. This disobedience of orders Jaques excused by alleging, that, when he broke into the wigwam, Rale was loading his gun, and declared, "that he would neither give nor take quarter." How little confidence can be placed in this statement of the lieutenant we learn from the fact, that, according to Hutchinson, Moulton himself doubted its truth at the time, and utterly disapproved the action.\*

An old Indian chief, named Mogg,† who had killed one of the Mohawks from his wigwam, was shot, and his helpless squaw and children were butchered. The other noted warriors found among the dead were Bomaseen, Job, Carabasset,‡ Wissememet, and Bomaseen's son-in-law.

---

\* Penhallow's statement is, "*Some say* that quarter was offered the Jesuit, which he refused, and would neither give nor take any." This uncertain *report*, of course, adds but little to the evidence for the alleged fact. The notice in the *N. E. Courant* relates, that the priest and Mogg "stayed in their houses, from whence they fought after the heat of the action was over, and declared (when they were taken) they would neither give nor take quarter." A newspaper paragraph, penned in the first excitement of the news, can have but little weight, as an independent testimony, in respect to what was not within the writer's knowledge.

† The sachem of Whittier's beautiful poem, "Mogg Megone." Boston, 1836.

‡ The hero of Mr. Deering's interesting drama, "Carabasset, a Tragedy." Portland, 1830.

After the bloody action, Harman, with his men, came up. The next morning, the English troops, taking for their plunder a few blankets, kettles, and guns, a little corn, and three barrels of gunpowder, set out on their return to Teconnet. After they had begun the march, one of the Mohawks was sent, or voluntarily returned, to fire the wigwams and the church, and then rejoined the company. Though Harman was absent from the fight, the credit of the action, whatever it might be, rested with him as the chief in command. When he returned to Boston, he was made a lieutenant-colonel; while Moulton, the principal actor in the exploit, had no reward but the general applause of the country. It is remarkable that the New England Courant ascribes the conduct of the whole affair to Harman, and does not so much as mention Moulton's name.

Of these two accounts it may be observed, that the English is more circumstantial and particular than the French, though this, in some respects, is true merely of such things as would probably be known only to the English. We are told that Rale's scalp was carried with the others to Boston; but not a word is said, in the English narrative, of the brutal indignity alleged to have been committed on his body. A sense of shame, it might be said on the other side, would account for this suppression; yet Moul-



ton's conduct with regard to Rale's death will hardly allow us to suppose, that, so far as he was concerned, he would have allowed such barbarity. What Charlevoix alleges of the violence done to the consecrated furniture of the church is admitted by Hutchinson, when he says, in a somewhat softening tone of apology, "New England Puritans thought it no sacrilege to take the plate from an idolatrous Roman Catholic church, which I suppose was all the profaneness offered to the sacred vessels. There were some expressions of zeal against idolatry, in breaking the crucifixes and other imagery which were found there."

With respect to the time and manner of Rale's death, it may be presumed that La Chasse, whose account Charlevoix follows, had his information from the Indians who escaped. On many occasions they, without doubt, made false reports to the missionaries; and in this case, their testimony can scarcely claim so much credit, as that on which the English statement rests. The strange exaggeration, by which Charlevoix swells the number of the English troops to eleven hundred men, can hardly be explained, except by a wild confusion in the impressions or remembrance of the Indians.

Penhallow says, that the whole number of Indians killed by the muskets, and drowned in the

river, was supposed to be eighty ; or, as some thought, more. It is stated, that two soldiers wounded, and one of the Mohawks killed, constituted all that the English suffered in the action. The Norridgwock tribe never lifted up its head after this blow. Though not extinct, that bloody day blotted it from the list of the red men's nations. Another sad chapter was added to the history of the white man's intercourse with his forest brother. Whittier has pictured the scene of ruin, which presented itself soon after the battle-day to some Indian wanderers.

“No wigwam smoke is curling there ;  
The very earth is scorched and bare ;  
And they pause and listen to catch a sound  
Of breathing life, but there comes not one,  
Save the fox's bark and the rabbit's bound ;  
And here and there, on the blackened ground,  
White bones are glistening in the sun.  
And where the house of prayer arose,  
And the holy hymn at daylight's close,  
And the aged priest stood up to bless  
The children of the wilderness,  
There is nought save ashes sodden and dank,  
And the birchen boats of the Norridgwock,  
Tethered to tree, and stump, and rock,  
Rotting along the river bank !”

Whoever has visited the pleasant town of Norridgwock, as it now is, must have heard of *Indian Old Point*, as the people call the place where

Rale's village stood, and perhaps curiosity may have carried him thither. If so, he has found a lovely, sequestered spot in the depth of nature's stillness, on a point around which the waters of the Kennebec, not far from their confluence with those of Sandy River, sweep on in their beautiful course, as if to the music of the rapids above; a spot over which the sad memory of the past, without its passions, will throw a charm, and on which, he will believe, the ceaseless worship of nature might blend itself with the aspirations of Christian devotion. He will find, that vestiges of the old settlement are not wanting now; that broken utensils, glass beads, and hatchets, have been turned up by the husbandman's plough, and are preserved by the people in the neighborhood; and he will turn away from the place with the feeling, that the hatefulness of the mad spirit of war is aggravated by such a connection with nature's sweet retirements.

A tradition is sometimes mentioned in that neighborhood, that when the English troops reached Rale's village, the Indians and their priest were all in their church, engaged in some religious service; and that the English, before they were aware of their danger, rushed in and cut them all down without mercy, priest and people, in the midst of their solemnities. I

know not the slightest historical evidence for such a story. It may have arisen from the natural disposition to exaggerate the horror of a scene in itself so tragical.

The bell of Father Rale's church is still in existence. Tradition has transmitted the following story of its discovery and preservation. An Indian lad, who assisted in burying the dead after the fight, took the bell from the smoking ruins of the church, and hid it some distance up the river. As long as he lived, he could never be persuaded to tell where he concealed it. To all questions on the subject, he would only reply, that the bell was safe; and would add, "May be Indian want it some time." Several years after his death, it was found, by a wood-cutter, in the hollow of a large pine, which had been uprooted by the winds. It was taken to Norridgwock, kept there a while, and finally deposited at Brunswick, where it is now preserved.

Rale lived and died as the central object of bitterly excited feelings, which were ready to believe any thing bad of him. Of some of the charges resting on his name, the truth may now appear at least dubious. Dr. Belknap has related, on the authority of Hugh Adams's manuscript, that an Indian of much apparent distinction, with hair remarkably soft and fine,

having about his person a prayer-book and the muster-roll of a chief, was killed near Oyster River, in June, 1724; and, from these circumstances, was supposed to be the natural son of Rale by an Indian woman, who had served him as a laundress. It must have been a quick and dark suspicion, which could insist upon such an inference from such premises. The conjectural accusation, so far as it calls for notice, is satisfactorily met by Dr. Harris's supposition, that the person in question was of the family of the Baron de Castine and his Indian wife, whose children always lived with their mother's relations.\*

The New England Courant,† in its notice of the action in which Rale was killed, says, "The priest's flag is brought to town, on which is portrayed five crosses; one at each corner, and one in the middle, surrounded with four bows and arrows, which he used to hoist as a help to devotion and courage, when he granted them absolution before any considerable expedition." As the writer here speaks, not of a

---

\* Belknap's *New Hampshire*, Vol. II. p. 57; and Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. VIII. p. 257.

† No. 160, Aug. 24th, (O. S.,) 1724. In Thomas Pemberton's MS. *Mass. Chronology*, (preserved in the archives of the Mass. Hist. Soc.,) p. 100, the same thing is stated in the same words.

rumor, but of what was actually brought to Boston, his testimony should be admitted. But what evidence does this flag afford, that, as has been alleged, Rale "even made the offices of devotion serve as incentives to the ferocity of the savages"? One, who should be disposed to take another view, might argue that he calmed the ferocity of the savages by mingling with it the offices of devotion; and probably the inference would be as just in this, as in other similar cases. It has always been the custom to associate devotion with war, prayer with slaughter; and our military arrangements are considered incomplete without chaplains. Those who can justify these usages, must regard Rale's flag as an emblem of the same spirit. It was a symbol of what he often taught the Indians, that their religion and the right to their possessions were strictly connected.

Rale has been charged with barbarous cruelty in one of the last acts of his life. When he was found fighting in one of the wigwams, as Hutchinson relates, he had an English boy with him, about fourteen years of age, who had been taken by the Indians about six months before. This boy he shot through the thigh, and afterwards stabbed in the body; but by the care of the surgeons, he recovered. Dr. Harris observes, "We search in vain for the evidence

of this revengeful deed." Had he forgotten that Hutchinson expressly says, "I find this act of cruelty in the account given by Harman upon oath"? But a question arises as to the value of this oath, when we remember that Harman was absent during the whole of the fight, and, as Hutchinson himself states, "did not come up till near night, when the action was over." He could not testify as an eye-witness of the deed; but he might have seen the wounded boy, and have been told by others how he was wounded. His deposition, therefore, could only furnish evidence of what was reported to him concerning an enemy, in a moment of the bitterest exasperation. Such evidence cannot, in the nature of the case, be satisfactory, in the absence of more sure testimony.\*

He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age. If we consider his mission as beginning when he first came to Quebec, he spent nearly thirty-five years in its labors and perils. His death was regarded by the people of Massachusetts as a signal triumph and deliverance. "The sudden destruction, on that memorable day," says Dr. Colman, of Boston, speaking as

---

\* Dr. Harris's reasoning on the subject proceeds on the supposition of the entire correctness of the French account of the fight, which is more than can be granted. *Mass. Hist. Coll.* 2d Series, Vol. VIII. p. 257.

Christians have strangely thought themselves allowed to speak of enemies, "was the singular work of God; the officers and soldiers piously put far from themselves the honor of it. And he, who was the father of the war, the ghostly father of those perfidious savages, like Balaam, the son of Beor, was slain among the enemy, after his vain attempts to curse us."\* Even at that day, however, there were those who, while they detested the character of Rale's agency, frankly expressed their admiration of his resolute spirit of endurance, and his earnest fidelity to the offices of his mission.

I find, after his death, a correspondence, referring to him, between the Governor of Canada and the Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts. Dummer wrote to Vaudreuil, September 15th, 1724, complaining of "the commission" the latter had given to Sebastian Rale. Vaudreuil replied, October 29th, 1724, that he was surprised the Lieutenant-Governor had not been sooner aware of "the safeguard and the commission" he had sent to the missionary, as he had never concealed, and was ready to justify, the act. He proceeds to speak of what he calls "the late murder" of the priest, and of the

---

\* Preface to Penhallow's *Indian Wars*, N. H. Hist. Coll. Vol. I. p. 17.



price previously set upon his head, which could be owing to nothing but his dutiful fidelity "in teaching those Indians, to whom the King of France could not refuse missionaries, because they always had been true to him and served him on all occasions."

Dummer's rejoinder, January 19th, 1725, states, that if Rale had confined himself to his duties as a Christian teacher within the French dominions, Vaudreuil's complaint had been just; but he was an incendiary among the Indians, stimulating them to fight the English and burn their possessions, ("as appears," says the Lieutenant-Governor, "by letters and manuscripts of his, which I have,") and had shown himself more than once at the head of Indian troops.\* He was slain in the heat of action, taking part with the open and avowed enemies of the English; and under such circumstances, his death furnished no just ground of complaint. Dummer reminded the French Governor, that the Reverend Mr. Willard, of Rutland, was killed, while in the peaceful discharge of his duties at home, and his scalp carried to Quebec in triumph; an

---

\* Rale himself says, in an "intercepted letter," (Mass. Hist. Coll. New Series, Vol. VIII. p. 266,) "The warriors set out on their way, and being arrived here, I embarked with them to go to war." But he might allege that he attended them, not as a warrior, but as their spiritual father and teacher.

act, which should silence all accusations about the death of the French priest.\*

If Rale voluntarily placed himself, by his influence and agency, among the operations of war, and chose to abide the result, he and his friends must have expected, by the usages of nations, that he would take the risk of whatever fate war might bring.

The spot, on which the Norridgwock missionary fell, was marked, some time after his death, by the erection of a cross. This, it is said, in process of time was cut down by a company of hunters. I believe it was replaced by some rude memorial in stone. But in 1833 a permanent monument was erected in honor of Rale. A movement for this purpose, in which Protestants as well as Catholics were interested, is traced to the suggestion of Dr. Jonathan Sibley, of Union, Maine. The project was taken up by Mr. William Allen, of Norridgwock, and Mr. Edward Kavanagh, the latter of whom contributed one hundred dollars towards the expense.

An acre of land was purchased, including the site of Rale's church and his grave. Over the grave, on the 23d of August, 1833, the anni-

---

\* Papers in the State House. *Letters*, II. 1724-1738, pp. 48, 77, and 106.

versary (according to the New Style) of the fight at Norridgwock, and just one hundred and nine years after its occurrence, the foundation was laid, and the monument raised, with much ceremony, amidst a large concourse of people. Bishop Fenwick, of Boston, directed the ceremonies, and delivered an address full of appropriate interest. Delegates from the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, and Canada Indians, were present on the occasion. The monument is about twenty feet high, including an iron cross, with which it is surmounted. On the south side of the base, fronting the Kennebec River, is an appropriate and somewhat long Latin inscription. I regret to add, that in 1836, some malicious persons, supposed to have come from a neighboring town, threw down the shaft of the monument in the night. The citizens of Norridgwock immediately replaced the shaft, and repaired the injury done to the monument, at their own expense. The individuals, who perpetrated the outrage, found no sympathy or countenance; and their conduct received a severe rebuke at the time from a writer in the *Christian Register* of August 27th, 1836.\*

---

\* For these particulars concerning Rale's monument, I am indebted to information kindly imparted by Professor Anderson, of Waterville College, Maine, and Mr. John L. Sibley, Assistant Librarian in Harvard University.

I have endeavored to give such a sketch of the life of Sebastian Rale, as might enable the reader to form a dispassionate judgment of his character. He is said to have been a vehement and pathetic preacher. Two months after his death, the Père de la Chasse, superior-general of the missions of Canada, paid a tribute to his memory in an interesting letter.\* Written in the glow of private friendship, and with the warm partiality of ecclesiastical fraternity, it pours forth a strain of indiscriminate eulogy over one, whom it regards as a holy martyr of the church. His dauntless courage and unchanging firmness, his severity to himself and his tenderness to others, his contempt of peril in the way of duty, his glad sacrifice of all, even of life, to the welfare of his wild disciples, his unyielding observance of the most rigorous discipline of the church, his patient endurance of hardship and privation, and his holy self-denial; all these are depicted, as might be expected, by a friend who loved, and by a Catholic who revered, the departed fellow-servant of the church.

While we cannot be expected to respond to this undistinguishing demand upon our admiration, I feel that we are equally bound to dis-

---

\* *Lettres Edifiantes*, Tom. XVII. pp. 325 - 343.

sent from the unqualified harshness and severity of our fathers. They spoke of Rale as men, sore with suffering, are apt to speak of an astute and powerful enemy. Rale had faults of his own, which were aggravated and multiplied by those of his order and his church; the faults of a priest ambitious of serving the interests of an ecclesiastical community, which were often mistaken for the higher interests of religion and of Christ. His temper, I think, was caustic and arrogant towards his opponents, inclining rather to irritate by defiance than to overcome by love. He felt too strongly that sense of power, which his position as the revered head and oracular guide of a body of rude, uncultivated men, naturally imparted. He was a devoted partisan; and, like devoted partisans of all nations and all churches, he did not escape the error of compelling the end to sanctify the means. It was an established part of the function of Jesuit missionaries to bend their influence steadily to the service of France, as well as to multiply converts to the faith. Rale, like the rest, I doubt not, sometimes used the arts of intrigue, and sometimes appealed to excitable passions, in the discharge of this function; and there was a ground of truth in the opinion entertained of his inflammatory influence.

But, whatever abatements from indiscriminate praise his faults or frailties may require, I cannot review his history without receiving a deep impression that he was a pious, devoted, and extraordinary man. Here was a scholar nurtured amidst European learning, and accustomed to the refinements of one of the most intellectual nations of the Old World, who banished himself from the pleasures of home and from the attractions of his native land, and passed thirty-five years of his life in the forests of an unbroken wilderness, on a distant shore, amidst the squalid rudeness of savage life, and with no companions, during those long years, but the wild men of the woods. With them he lived as a friend, as a benefactor, as a brother ; sharing their coarse fare, their disgusting modes of life, their wants, their perils, their exposures under the stern inclemency of a hard climate ; always holding his life cheap in the toil of duty, and at last yielding himself a victim to dangers which he disdained to escape. And all this, that he might gather these rude men, as he believed, into the fold of the church ; that he might bring them to what he sincerely held to be the truth of God and the light of heaven.

It is unnecessary to ask, here, what was the real value of his labors, or the amount of

his success. Efforts and sacrifices like these are not made but by men, whose inward convictions have become a law to their hearts; and to one who sees aright, obedience to that law, through searching trial and the mortification of self, is always an object of high moral respect. So far as the patient toils of the missionary, and love for the darkened soul of the Indian, are concerned, we may place the names of Eliot and of Rale in a fellowship, which they indeed would both have rejected, but which we may regard as hallowed and true. For they both belonged to the goodly company of those, who have given their strength, their zeal, their lives, to the beautiful labors of pious benevolence.





L I F E

OF

WILLIAM PALFREY,

PAYMASTER-GENERAL IN THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION;

BY

JOHN GORHAM PALFREY, LL. D.



# WILLIAM PALFREY.

---

## CHAPTER I.

*Birth and Education.—A Patriot in his Teens.  
—Apprenticeship to Nathaniel Wheelwright.—  
Free American Fire Club.—Early Adventures  
in Trade.—A Freemason and Cadet.—Part-  
nership and Courtship.—Voyage to Virginia.  
—Engagement with John Hancock.—Mar-  
riage.—New Arrangements of Business.—  
Letter to Hayley.*

THE subject of the following sketch filled posts of duty, demanding not only the most approved uprightness, but capacity and energy of no ordinary kind. He was officially brought into intimate relations with some of the most prominent events and actors of the revolutionary period. And he perished in the public service, under circumstances such as at once occasioned embarrassment to the public business in an important department, and enhanced the sympathy extended to his private friends.

WILLIAM PALFREY, the descendant of a reputable line of Boston mechanics, was born in that town, on the 24th of February, 1741.\* Of his boyhood and youth there is nothing to record, except that they passed in the diligent cultivation of the habits which prepare for usefulness, and the accomplishments which become a gentleman. In these days of precocious philosophy, when many an elaborately educated child is unapt at writing a legible letter, or keeping an intelligible account of a day's expenses, it is a feast to the eye, to look at the *ciphering book* of a school-boy of the middle of the last century, where, through German text and Italian hand in black and red, and tables of irreproachable squareness,

---

\* He was the second son and third child of Hannah (Tapper) and Thomas, who was son of Abigail (Brisco) and William, who was son of Constance and William. His father, grandfather, and great grandfather were sail-makers. The great grandfather is believed to have been grandson of Peter Palfrey, who was at Salem as early as 1626, one of the "three honest and prudent men" associated with Mr. Roger Conant in the management of the plantation. In 1632, when each town in the colony sent two men to advise with the Governor and Assistants, (the first House of Representatives,) Peter Palfrey was deputed from Salem with Mr. Conant. He was also one of the selectmen. In advanced life he removed to Reading, and there died. His son, Jonathan, baptized in the Salem Church, on the 25th of December, 1636, was probably father of the first William.

interspersed with birds and beasts of eccentric proportions, executed by the sleight of that cunning instrument, the pen, one traces the fruits of a strict and earnest application of the mind, and a love of exactness, order, and beauty, which effectively help a boy to become what a man ought to be.

Without pretension to genius, young Palfrey possessed a quick, clear, and correct mind, with a cheerful enterprise, which aspired to do a variety of things, and to do all as well as possible. He was drilled in Latin under famous Master John Lovell. His handwriting was of unsurpassed beauty. He cultivated music and drawing. He wrote poetry. He acquired the French language, at that time an extremely rare accomplishment. Without any view to a sea life, he studied geometry and navigation. He was fond of physical science, and made philosophical experiments. One of his early purchases was a microscope of considerable value. In his teens, he was a diligent collector of books, which, as appears from his careful minutes of such acquisitions, were the standard works of the language, with scarcely an exception, except for occasional publications relating to the political movements of the time. In these he took an interest from an early age. It could hardly have been otherwise, trained as he was in one of the primary schools, in which New England

was now teaching the grammar of future independence. A bright and spirited boy, a Boston sail-maker's son, brought up under the administrations of Shirley, Pownall, and Bernard, might be expected to turn out a rather fiery son of liberty.

An agreeable person, a frank and generous expression of countenance, great gayety and heartiness of disposition, a fund of anecdote, a seasoning of original wit, and a somewhat sedulous attention to dress as well as manners, were advantages, which, added to his perfectly correct habits, his known industry and trustworthiness, and his forwardness and influence in the political circle of his equals in age, introduced him favorably to the good society of the town. Mr. Nathaniel Wheelwright, (the great merchant of the time, after the elder Mr. Hancock,) in whose counting-room he was educated for mercantile life, reposed in him the utmost confidence, and exerted himself in the kindest manner for his advancement.

The friendship, which thus grew up, was only terminated by Mr. Wheelwright's death. A note from that gentleman, at the time of his misfortunes, solicits of Mr. Hancock to spare Mr. Palfrey from his own concerns for a few days, to despatch some intricate business, which, he says, "none can execute so well;" and from the West Indies, a short time before his death, he

wrote to his young friend a letter full of gratitude for the offer to receive a son of his into his own family.\*

Long before he was of age, young Palfrey had employed his leisure in transacting business on his own account. A set of books, opened just after he had finished his eighteenth year, con-

---

\* In his seventeenth year, while in the employment of Mr. Wheelwright, he belonged to an association called the "Free American Fire Club," among the members of which (twenty-six in number, by limitation) are the names of some of the most considerable citizens of the place. Before the organization of the Fire Department in 1825, these voluntary associations were common. It is not many years since a pair of leathern buckets, containing a bed-key and fire-bags, and showily painted with the device of the club and the owner's name, made part of the regular hall furniture of our substantial citizens. These were periodically inspected by the proper officers, and convivial meetings of the association promoted acquaintance, and kept up the *esprit de corps*. The antiquaries can tell whether the "Free American" was the earliest association of this kind in Boston. The first article looks as if it might be so, not referring to any other. It is as follows, under the date of July 12th, 1757. "If God, in his providence, should permit the breaking out of fire in Boston, where we dwell, we will be helpful to each other in extinguishing the same, and in saving and taking the utmost care of each other's goods, by carefully conveying them to some convenient place of security, at the direction of the owner, if present, or otherwise according to the best of our judgment, and do our utmost to prevent any embezzlement of the same."

tain entries brought forward from earlier minutes. He shipped coffee and sugar to Virginia; fish, pork, and flour, to the Spanish Main; and soap, shoes, and other articles, to the then recently opened markets at Louisbourg and Quebec. In the year 1762, on attaining his majority, he associated himself with the fraternity of Freemasons, and with the Independent Company of Cadets, the Governor's guard.

In the same year, he formed a partnership in business with the brother of the lady whom he afterwards married, and was already making purchases of household utensils, with a view to his intended domestic establishment. It may deserve mention that his account-books, when he was just past twenty-one years of age, three years before his marriage, contain minutes of sums committed to his future bride, to be invested for the common benefit, an agreeable form of *retainer*, redolent of times when constancy did not "dwell" only "in worlds above," and matrimony was a methodical business affair. In the autumn of the following year, he made a voyage of business to Virginia. There, in Williamsburg and its neighborhood, he passed the winter, and, as was uniformly his good fortune wherever he went, contracted valuable friendships, leading to a large correspondence not relinquished for several years.



In the summer of 1764, Thomas Hancock died, leaving his large estate to his nephew John, then twenty-seven years of age. The young heir, whose education had been such as rather to qualify him for the conspicuous part which he was destined to act in society, than for the management of an extensive business, saw the expediency of securing the aid of some one distinguished for the kind of ability, which it was no discredit to himself not to possess in a high degree. His choice fell on the subject of this memoir, who, in October, engaged with Mr. Hancock on a salary, stipulating "to be allowed liberty to do his own business."

On the 14th of February, 1765, he was married to Susan Cazneau, a descendant of one of the Huguenot families who, toward the close of the seventeenth century, had come over from Rochelle, in consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantes.\* In the few but eventful years which they were to pass together, she proved a prudent and affectionate partner to him, and a fond and judicious parent to his children. His business having increased, by the spring of the following year, so as to require his whole attention, he left the employment of Mr.

---

\* She was daughter of Mary (Scott) and Peace (Paix) Cazneau, son of Margaret (Germain), who married Paix Cazneau, a fellow-emigrant, at the French settlement at Oxford, Massachusetts, and died at Wrentham, in April, 1769, at the age of ninety-seven.

Hancock for an establishment of his own. This he continued to enlarge for several months; but the obnoxious acts of the British Parliament, in 1767, imposing new duties on certain articles of importation, and appointing commissioners of the customs to reside in the colonies, led to resolutions of the citizens of Boston, which operated to the destruction of foreign trade. The duties on paper, glass, painters' colors, and tea, were to take effect on the 20th of November, a few days before which time Mr. Palfrey gave up his own establishment, and resumed the connection with Mr. Hancock, which was continued, at home and abroad, till the breaking out of the war.

A portion of one of his letters to his commercial correspondent in London, Mr. Alderman Hayley, brother-in-law of John Wilkes, expresses the prevailing despondency and alarm of the time. Under the date of April 14th, 1767, he writes to that gentleman as follows;

“In short, Sir, we are in a most wretched situation, and, unless very speedily relieved, must be entirely ruined. The new impositions have awakened the people to a sense of the danger they are in, from a pursuit of their former luxurious and extravagant way of life; and the only emulation seems now to be, who shall stand foremost in industry and economy. The mer-

chants here have lately had a meeting, and have fixed upon certain measures for stopping the further importation of English goods, which I herewith enclose you. These resolutions have been forwarded to the other governments as far as Philadelphia, and very favorable accounts received; so that I have not the least doubt they will be universally adopted. They have been signed here by all the principal importers, and I hope will have the desired effect.

“It stands the mercantile part of Great Britain in hand to lend their assistance to our relief. It is to them, in a great measure, we look for redress. That body of men have always been so truly and so justly reputable as to acquire great weight with the Parliament in all affairs that more immediately affect the trading and manufacturing part of the nation; and we sincerely hope and earnestly beg they will not be wanting in using their utmost endeavors to obtain a redress of our grievances, of which the new duties for the sole purpose of raising a revenue is the greatest, most unconstitutional, and in its nature and tendency most destructive of our just rights and privileges.

“But I forbear saying more on this subject, lest I should be thought tedious; and refer you to a pamphlet, which I have sent you by the master of this vessel, called ‘The Farmer’s Let-

ters,' which were wrote by an eminent civilian in Philadelphia, and which have been justly esteemed, through the whole continent, for the strength of reason and argument, and the thorough knowledge of the British constitution and the rights of mankind, which they contain."

---

## CHAPTER II.

*Schemes for Taxing the Colonies. — Discontent thereat in Boston. — Address of the Sons of Liberty to John Wilkes. — Business Connection of Palfrey with Colonel Harrison. — Reply of Wilkes to the Sons of Liberty. — Further Correspondence.*

MR. GRENVILLE'S Stamp Act, in 1765, was the first attempt of the government at home to collect an internal tax in British North America. That it was in violation, not only of the letter of the charters, but of that fundamental principle of English liberty, which protects the subject from being taxed except by his representatives, was a point so clear and so important as immediately to array against it a formidable opposition of enlightened and patriotic men on both

sides of the water. The popular commotions in Boston and elsewhere, the Virginia Resolutions of Patrick Henry, the determination of the people to abstain from the use of the stamps at any sacrifice, and at length the acquiescence of the courts and custom-houses in a necessity which there was no escaping, and their proceeding to do business as usual without the intervention of the obnoxious papers, satisfied the ministry that their scheme could not be executed; and the act was repealed within five months after the time fixed upon for it to go into operation.

But the right of Parliament to impose duties for the *regulation of commerce*, as distinct from the *raising of a revenue*, had not as yet been called in question by the colonists. The line between the two is in theory a faint and evanescent one, but the party interested had not in past time seen reason to complain of encroachments upon it in practice. On this vantage ground the ministry resolved to push their scheme of American taxation. Small duties were laid on paper, glass, teas, and painters' colors, imported into America, and commissioners were appointed to oversee their collection, in place of the surveyors of the customs in America, hitherto appointed by the commissioners in England. These measures, being regarded as a

more insidious, and equally offensive, form of oppression with that which had been recently defeated, encountered from the outset a stubborn opposition on the part of the colonists, which ultimately led to the sending of troops for the support of government, and so to the war of the revolution.

In this opposition the subject of this memoir took a strong interest and an active part. As the confidential man of business of Hancock, he held a position enhancing the influence naturally due to his intelligence and zeal. At the meetings of the merchants, and of the *Sons of Liberty*, he was frequently employed as secretary, and his papers contain various memoranda, not perhaps preserved elsewhere, of the movements of the time.

The quarrel of John Wilkes with the ministry, originating in his publications in the "North Briton," naturally gave him a popularity with the opponents of government in America. In defiance of his sentence of outlawry, he, in the spring of 1768, returned from the Continent to England, where he was committed to the King's Bench Prison, and was immediately returned to Parliament as member for Middlesex. On this occasion, "the friends of liberty, Wilkes, peace, and good order, assembled at the Whig Tavern, Boston, New England, to the number of Forty-

Five, or upwards,"\* took the "first opportunity to congratulate his country, the British colonies, and himself, on his happy return to the land worthy such an inhabitant; worthy, as they had lately manifested an incontestable proof of virtue in the honorable and most important trust reposed in him by the county of Middlesex." They expressed their confidence, that he would "convince Great Britain and Ireland, in Europe, the British colonies, islands, and plantations in America, that he was one of those incorruptibly honest men reserved by Heaven to bless and perhaps save a tottering empire; that majesty can never be secure but in the arms of a brave and united people; that nothing but a common interest, and absolute confidence in an impartial and general protection, can combine so many millions of men, born to make laws for themselves, conscious and invincibly tenacious of their rights." That the British constitution

---

\* This expression was probably an allusion to the famous "No. 45" of the "North Briton," containing those animadversions of Wilkes on the King's speech, which led to his first prosecution. The number *Forty-Five* became one of the watchwords of the day, as did afterwards the numbers *Ninety-Two* and *Seventeen*, representing the majority and minority in the House of Representatives, on the question of acceding to Lord Hillsborough's demand for a rescinding of the Resolve directing a circular invitation to the other colonies to meet and consult upon their common grievances.

still existed, they professed to be their glory. Feeble and infirm as it was, they could not, they would not, despair of it. To Mr. Wilkes they owed much for his strenuous endeavors to preserve it. Those generous and inflexible principles, which had rendered him so greatly eminent, supported his claim to their favor and esteem. To vindicate Americans, was not to desert himself. They asked leave, therefore, to express their confidence in his approved abilities and steady patriotism. His country, the British empire, and unborn millions, pleaded an exertion at this alarming crisis. His perseverance in the *good old cause* might still prevent the great system from dashing to pieces. It was from his endeavors they hoped for a royal "*pascite, ut ante, boves,*" and from their attachment to peace and good order they waited for a constitutional redress, being determined that the King of Great Britain should have subjects, but not slaves, in these remote parts of his dominions. And they humbly presented him the *Farmer*; his sentiments were theirs.

If something is always to be indulged to the spirit of liberty, much is fairly to be allowed to its enthusiastic prepossessions. The grave Massachusetts patriots as yet knew Wilkes only as the manful and triumphant champion of the constitutional privileges of the subject, and a



goadings thorn in the side of their oppressors. If later events revealed him as scarcely a worthy confederate for them, they are not severely to be blamed for not anticipating the discovery. The address was forwarded by Mr. Palfrey through Hayley, and led to a frequent interchange of private letters down to the time when the English patriot's attention became engrossed by his offices in the city.

Another correspondence, begun about the same time, and continued till the active business of the revolution found different occupation for both parties, was with Colonel Benjamin Harrison, afterwards a delegate from Virginia in the first four Continental Congresses, and Governor of that state. The Virginia planters of that day were often their own merchants. Harrison had flour-mills and a shipyard at his fine patrimonial estate of Berkeley, on James River. Mr. Palfrey was his business correspondent in Boston, receiving his corn and flour, and making him returns in various domestic and foreign commodities. But Palfrey's correspondence with men of sense never stopped short in matters of business. Disquisitions on theoretical politics, into which his pen was occasionally tempted, were not his *forte*. To that kind of exercise he had not been bred. But he was fond of writing, and his genial flow of spirits,

his hearty friendliness, his sagacity, good sense, and large intelligence respecting passing events, made his letters too agreeable to be lost for want of a free reciprocity.

In September, Mr. Palfrey conveyed to the Sons of Liberty the answer of Wilkes to their address, dated at the King's Bench Prison, July 19th. He professed himself extremely honored by their letter, and the valuable present which accompanied it. Nothing could give him more satisfaction, than to find the true spirit of liberty so generally diffused through the most remote parts of the British monarchy. He thanked them very heartily for the generous and rational entertainment of the Farmer's Letters, in which the cause of freedom was perfectly understood, and ably defended. As a member of the legislature, he would always give a particular attention to whatever respected the interests of America, which he believed to be intimately connected with, and of essential moment to, the parent country, and the common welfare of the great political system.

After the first claims of duty to England, and of gratitude to the county of Middlesex, none should engage him more than the affairs of the colonies, which he considered as the *propugnacula imperii*, and he knew how much of the strength and weight of the empire was

owed to, and derived from, them. He would ever avow himself a friend to universal liberty. He hoped that freedom would ever flourish under both hemispheres, and he doubted not, from the spirit and firmness of the Americans, that they would be careful to transmit to their posterity the invaluable rights and franchises which they had received from their ancestors. Liberty he considered as the birthright of every subject of the British empire, and he held Magna Charta to be in as full force in America as in Europe.

He hoped that these truths would become generally known and acknowledged through the wide-extended dominions of their sovereign, and that a real union of the whole would prevail to save the whole, and to guard the public liberty, if invaded by despotic ministers, in the most remote, equally as in the central parts, of the vast empire. It should be the study of his life to give the clearest proofs that he had at heart the welfare and prosperity of every part of the monarchy. The only ambition he felt was to distinguish himself as a friend of the rights of mankind, both religious and civil, as a man zealous for the preservation of the constitution and the sovereign, *with all our laws and native liberties that ask not his leave*, if he might use the expression of Milton. His

conduct should be steady and uniform, directed in every point by an obedience to the laws, and a reverence to the constitution. The favorable opinion, which the gentlemen of the committee of the Sons of Liberty, in the town of Boston, had been pleased to express of him, was a great encouragement and a noble reward of his efforts in the service of the kingdom. He hoped to show himself not quite unworthy of an honor which he felt as he ought.

The Sons of Liberty answered this letter on the 2d of October. On its reception, they say, the members were immediately assembled, and inexpressible was the satisfaction of their regale on the genuine sentiments of a worthy Briton. His health, his friends, and cause, were the toasts of the evening. They congratulated themselves on their well placed confidence, and presumed much on the exertions of such a martyr to universal liberty. They felt, with fraternal concern, that Europe in a ferment, America on the point of bursting into flames, more pressingly required the patriot senator, the wise and honest counsellor, than the desolating conqueror.

His noble disdain of inadequate ministers and contemptible salary-hunters had by no means impaired their sense of the dignity of a free-man, or the importance of defending his mi-

nutest privilege against the determined invasion of the most formidable power on earth. And did not a British affection, and hopes of a speedy reform in British counsels, soothe and restrain a too well founded resentment, no one can divine what long ere now had been the condition of the creatures of that administration, which had filled Great Britain and the colonies with high and universal discontent; had almost unhinged their commercial and political connections; had annihilated the constitutional legislature of the province; had turned the Parliament House into a main guard; issued orders to evacuate the province factory of its inhabitants, to convert it into a barrack for soldiers, after sufficient provision had been made elsewhere; and endeavored, by pitiful art and emissaries, to effect what usurped and stretched authority dared not to pursue.

Could Britons wish them to abandon their lives and properties to such rapine and plunder; to become traitors to that constitution which for ages had been the citadel of their own safety; to acknowledge fellow-subjects for absolute sovereigns, that by their example they might be the more readily reduced to absolute slaves? Was their reluctance to oppose brother to brother, deemed a prospect of their submission? Or, *e contra*, was a mere presumption, that indignation

and despair might hurry them on to violent measures, ground sufficient to treat them with all the parade of a triumph over vanquished rebels? Humiliating as this might seem, it was the case of a territory containing near four hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, which had hitherto never produced a single Jacobite.

Numerous friends in the colonies having discovered a great desire to see his letter, they presumed to prefer a request for leave to its publication. And they conclude, "With ardent wishes for your speedy enlargement, elated expectations of sharing in your impartial concern for your country, the spreading empire of your sovereign, wherever extended, we remain, Unshaken Hero, your steady friends, and much obliged humble servants."

Two more letters completed the correspondence between Wilkes and the Sons of Liberty. He wrote to them, March 30th, 1769, that if he had been permitted to take his seat in the House of Commons, he would have been eager to move the repeal of the late act, which laid the new duties on paper, paint, and other articles. He would have done this from the full persuasion, not only of its being highly impolitic and inexpedient, but likewise absolutely unjust and unconstitutional; a direct violation of the great fundamental principles of civil liberty. The pres-

ent session of Parliament had been, in many instances, most unfavorable to public liberty; but he hoped that the next and a more upright administration would restore all the subjects of the British empire to the possession of their rights, and he wished to enjoy the satisfaction of contributing to so noble a work.

He had read with grief and indignation the proceedings of the ministry, with regard to the troops ordered to Boston, as if it were the capital of a province belonging to enemies, or in the possession of rebels. Asiatic despotism would not present a picture more odious in the eyes of humanity, than the sanctuary of justice and law turned into a main guard. He admired exceedingly the prudence and temper of the American patriots on so intricate an occasion, maintaining at the same time their own dignity and the true spirit of liberty. By this wise and excellent conduct they had disappointed their enemies, and convinced their friends that an entire reliance was to be had on the supporters of freedom in Boston, in every occurrence, however delicate or dangerous.

Their moderation prevented the effusion of blood, which had been shed by the military in St. George's Fields, on the most frivolous pretext, and in the most inhuman way. He submitted to them the propriety of the publication

of any letters which might pass between them. They were the true judges for what might respect the New World. Perhaps, while he was doomed to prison,\* unfair advantages might be taken against him, which he would find it difficult to overcome. He left the whole, however, to their mature consideration, with the truest assurance that in whatever way he could serve the generous cause of liberty, he would be active and zealous. They would always oblige him by pointing out the particulars respecting themselves.

Their reply, signed by James Otis, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Richard Dana, Benjamin Kent, John Adams, Joseph Warren, Benjamin Church, Thomas Young, and Josiah Quincy, Jr., as their committee, was as follows ;

“SIR,

“Many unforeseen engagements and unavoidable accidents furnish us with our only apology for not transmitting a seasonable answer to your favor of March last. We flatter ourselves you will be so kind as yet to accept of our most sincere thanks for all your noble and generous expressions of regard for the colonies. We yet too sensibly feel the loss of every right,

---

\* He was discharged from prison the following spring.



liberty, and privilege, that can distinguish a free-man from a slave, not to sympathize in the most tender manner with you, in the conflict you have been so long engaged in, and in the sufferings you now severely labor under, so far as we can judge, only for a firm and intrepid opposition to ministerial despotism. We easily perceive the causes and motives of that relentless, unremitted ardor and fury with which you are persecuted. It is not more for your own sake, than for the invincible resolution with which you have supported the cause of liberty and of mankind.

“With us also the laws seem to lie prostrate at the feet of power. Our city is yet a garrison filled with armed men, as our harbor is with cutters, cruisers, and other armed vessels. A main guard is yet placed at the doors of our State House. The other side of the Exchange is turned into a guarded den of revenue officers, to plunder our trade and drain the country of its money, not only without our consent, but against repeated remonstrances. The military are guilty of all kinds of licentiousness. The public streets are unsafe to walk in, for either sex, by night or by day. Prosecutions, civil and criminal, against the inhabitants, are pushed with great rancor and rigor, while those against the troops and the revenue officers and

their confederates [are] frowned upon and embarrassed by every possible means in the power of those who are inimical to the rights of the subject. Sometimes small fines are imposed, that tend to encourage a repetition of enormities. When every thing else fails, a *nol. pros.* is entered, and that power is claimed here as an uncontrollable prerogative of the crown, and by the Attorney-General exercised with as little ceremony or modesty as in the reigns of any of the Stuarts.

“Such, without exaggeration, is the present wretched state of the once happy and flourishing city of Boston. Such, in a degree, is the state of all our trading towns; and such, in effect, is the state of the whole continent. This would be intolerable, had England been really at the expense of settling and defending the ancient colonies; for even that would not have deprived us of the rights of men, or the freedom of citizens.

“It may not be disagreeable to you to receive a short sketch of our humble opinion of the present situation of North America, in some other respects. There has not been, since the last war, a naval force stationed in St. Lawrence River sufficient to cover a city from an attack of six sail of the line. The forces are in a manner all drawn down to the coasts

of the ocean, in conjunction with an army of revenue officers, and a fleet of small cruisers and cutters, to destroy your own commerce; and they are accordingly as greedy after their prey, as if cruising on a foreign enemy. The Indian nations on the great rivers St. Lawrence and Mississippi, which are well known to surround all the British colonies, are left at liberty to intrigue as usual with the French and Spaniards, to cut the throats of our back inhabitants at pleasure. Some in power here and at home, it is said, have hinted this as done by design, to enforce obedience to the revenue laws. Something of the kind has been thrown out in the publications on both sides the Atlantic.

“What foundation there may be for the conjectures that Canada will be given up for partial considerations or interest, or suffered to fall a sacrifice to a few acts for raising an American revenue, which will never defray the charges of collecting, we know not. This, however, may be depended on, that the French and Spaniards are strong in the West Indies; four or five thousand regulars from Old Spain have actually repossessed his Spanish Majesty of Orleans in the Mississippi, and we all know that a strong squadron from Brest, with troops, have a chance of a passage to Quebec, while a fleet, if ready, may be beating out of the Eng-

lish Channel. Forewarned, forearmed! The French and Spaniards never will forget nor forgive the severe drubbing they received in the last war; and, from all appearances, it is much to be apprehended the parties to the Family Compact are meditating some great blow, and are as like to strike in North America as in Corsica. Perhaps that very expedition was the rather formed against that hero Paoli but to whet their swords, and discipline the French slaves for the further carnage of sons of liberty. Where so likely to begin as in North America? And however light some may make of the loss of Canada, there is reason to fear, should the French ever be suffered to repossess themselves of that country, the event would soon prove fatal to Britain, if not to the whole British empire.

“We have not thought it best to publish your letters. You are at liberty to dispose of ours as you think fit.

“That you may be soon fully restored to your liberty, your family, your friends, your country, and to the world, and enjoy all imaginable prosperity, is the ardent wish and fervent prayer of the friends of liberty in Boston.

“Boston, November 4th, 1769.”

## CHAPTER III.

*Opinions and Communications on passing Events.*  
— *Contributions to the Newspapers.* — *Correspondence with Wilkes.* — *Characters of eminent Contemporaries.* — *Account of Hutchinson.*  
— *Pause in political Movements.* — *Voyage to England.* — *Visits to London and Bristol.* — *Political Intelligence.*

WHILE Mr. Palfrey was the medium of communication between Wilkes and the Sons of Liberty, and afterwards, he was receiving and transmitting other information on his own account. His minute narratives, often as an eye-witness, of the interesting transactions of which Boston was now the scene, with his free expressions of opinion upon them as they occurred, if colored, as was natural, by the feelings of the partisan, show, on the whole, a careful and candid observation.

He shared in the rage of his fellow-citizens at the assault of the Commissioner Robinson and others upon James Otis; the murder of the boy Snider by Richardson, the custom-officer; and the *Massacre*, so called, on the 5th of March, 1770. Of part of this last transaction he was a spectator, having reached the spot just before

the soldiers fired ; and a few days after, he wrote a circumstantial account of it to Wilkes, as it appeared to the jury of inquest, of which he was a member. He took a conspicuous part in the affair of Mein, the Scotch bookseller, against whom Hancock instituted a suit by a power of attorney from a London house, and who was alleged at home, by himself and his friends, to have been driven from Boston by a persecution occasioned by his refusal to come into the non-importation agreements.

Mein accused Hancock, and other merchants of the patriot party, of having violated those agreements ; and this controversy brought Palfrey, in Hancock's behalf, into the newspapers, to which, particularly to Edes's Gazette, he made frequent communications, with his signature and anonymously, on this and other subjects. A portion of them, of a humorous character, prepared jointly with James Otis,\* must have been much indebted for their contemporaneous popularity to the spirit of allusions which cannot now be recovered. He contributed to the odium which followed Bernard from the province, by publishing a deposition of an accomplice, charging him with an embezzlement from the revenue.†

---

\* "Anecdotes for the Amusement of the Cabal."

† Edes's Gazette, June 12th, 1769. This deposition of one Toovey, which he informed Wilkes he had obtained

He regretted the selection of Franklin, in 1770, to be agent for the province, as successor to Mr. De Berdt, distrusting the patriotism of that eminent person, not then so fully tried as afterwards, and wishing, with many others, that the appointment should fall on Arthur Lee.

In behalf of the Boston merchants, he wrote, in September of that year, to the committee of merchants at Philadelphia, urging a continued adherence to the non-importation agreement, and proposing a meeting of committees of mer-

---

from "a gentleman of the first rank in the province," (afterwards specified to be Temple,) Wilkes published in England, with a preface of his own, republished here in Edes's Gazette of October 9th. Wilkes wrote to his friend, "Governor Bernard is looked on with horror by all true Englishmen. We are frequently meeting together with our American friends, to concert measures to punish him in Westminster Hall for having dared to quarter troops contrary to an express act of Parliament. We shall have the best law advice, and proper powers for this purpose must be sent over to your agents here. Sergeant Glynn will give us his advice *gratis*, in all the steps to be pursued. Petitions to the King and Parliament are useless, although necessary forms. They are both determined against you. The secret history of the Stamp Act would give you the real sentiments of the court. Westminster Hall will do you justice, and a great number of separate actions against him will make your late proud, despotic minister tremble. You have many warm friends here, who will never give up your cause, nor rest till the *Declaratory Bill*, as well as *all the late duties*, are absolutely repealed."

chants from all the northern governments to concert a plan of more perfect union in that important measure. And when it fell through, in consequence of the defection of the merchants of New York, and the introduction of goods through New Hampshire, he was so chagrined as to declare, "The ministry have now completely conquered America; the colonies have strengthened their hands, and must take the consequences."

In his correspondence he drew at length the characters, illustrated by anecdotes, of friends and foes to the patriot cause; of Otis, Adams, Quincy, Temple, and Hancock, on the one side, of Bernard and Hutchinson, Colonel Dalrymple, Attorney-General Sewall, Sheriff Greenleaf, Justice Murray, Commissioners Paxton and Hallowell, on the other.

Such statements, no matter how honest the source whence they proceed, if not made public during the lifetime of their author and their subject, are no proper materials for history. No man's posthumous reputation should be at the mercy of mere assertions, which he never had opportunity to refute. There is no greater wrong than that of disinterring the scandals of old time, uncontradicted, it may be, because unknown, unless it be the wrong of recording and storing them for that purpose. All of us,



if we live long enough to grow wiser and more just, live to correct many of the harsh judgments of early days, and to see conduct and events in a favorable or an indulgent light, which, before prejudice and passion had died a natural death, or before what seemed inexplicable had been explained, we had with equal honesty regarded with mere reprobation; and if we do not live thus long, still nobody can tell what qualification of his sternness, or what refutation of his errors, a further time might bring.

To the rule excluding posthumous testimony against character, there may be one exception. He who violates it forfeits its protection for himself. Hutchinson prepared a record of the men who had baffled him in his public career, for the eye of another age, when the traduced would not be here to defend themselves, nor the accuser to be challenged for his proof. The following outline of his course and character, as they appeared to an intelligent contemporary, may serve as a pendant to some of his own sketches of distinguished opponents of his administration;\* though, if it contained aught in the nature of new facts prejudicial to his fame, it would not, for the

---

\* Hutchinson's *History*, Vol. III. pp. 86, et seq. 292, et seq.

reasons which have been suggested, have insertion here.

“I sincerely wish,” wrote Palfrey to Wilkes, October 30th, 1770, “that it was in my power to give you a favorable account of the state of our public affairs; but every thing here seems to be tending fast towards that stupid, senseless state of slavery, which commonly follows a long but unsuccessful struggle for liberty. Even the most animating examples have lost their usual effect, and the people seem to be quite borne down by the powerful opposition of their enemies. I shall give you a few instances of the management of the ministerial faction, which I shall leave with you to make your own reflections upon.

“Before I begin, it may not be amiss to give you a short sketch of the character of Mr. Hutchinson, the present Commander-in-Chief of this province, the particulars of which, perhaps, you have not yet been acquainted with. He descended from a family, who were among the first settlers of this province, some of whom had filled the first places of honor in it. The paternal inheritance, being many times divided among large families, was near exhausted when a small portion of it descended to him. He was educated at Harvard College, in Cambridge, after which he practised merchandise, and was for

many years in the Holland trade, where he constantly practised all the various methods of smuggling. He inherited from his ancestors a strange kind of attachment to what is called the King's prerogative; but, being a man of the greatest duplicity, he had art enough to conceal it from the public, and about thirty years ago, he was chosen representative for the town of Boston, and afterwards speaker of the House. Here he had an opportunity of distinguishing those great abilities he had acquired by long study and close application, and which might have been employed to the great advantage of his country, if an unbounded ambition, and a desire to promote the grandeur of his family, had not eradicated every other consideration.

“He was soon marked out as a proper person to promote the *purposes of government*, or, in other words, the tyranny of administration. He was appointed a Judge of probate of wills for this county; in which office, by an affected humility of deportment, and real distribution of impartial justice, he gained the universal esteem of the public. Upon a vacancy in the Bench of Judges in the highest court of judicature in this province, he was appointed Chief Justice by Governor Bernard, to the great disappointment and mortification of some of the old practitioners at the bar, among the first of whom was Mr. Otis's

father, a gentleman who had long been in the practice of the law, and who, from his fortune, connections, and great interest in the county where he dwelt, thought himself entitled to that honor before Mr. Hutchinson. Hence originated that bitter enmity, which has ever since subsisted between the Otis and Hutchinson families in this province.

“Mr. Hutchinson had for some years before held a seat at the council board ; and even after he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor, he was several times elected counsellor, and still retained his other offices, the impropriety of which was never called in question till Mr. Otis was elected member for Boston.

“In the time of the Stamp Act, he was exceeding zealous to have that odious and oppressive tax carried into execution ; and by his connections with, and influence over, Governor Bernard, he procured the office of stamp-master for his brother Oliver ; in resentment of which, the populace destroyed his dwelling-house and furniture. It happened, the next day the Superior Court was to be held. He appeared there without his robes, and, in a most pathetic and artful speech to the grand jury, so wrought upon his audience, that not a man who was present could refrain from tears. The loss he sustained by the tumult of that night was afterwards amply

made up to him by the House of Representatives ; and he went upon the floor and thanked them in person.

“ In all public steps taken by Sir Francis, it is confidently said he has been his secret adviser ; and you may remember, that in a letter from Sir Francis to Lord Hillsborough, he says he can depend upon Mr. Hutchinson’s firmness and resolution as much as he can upon his own ; and no person ever yet doubted the truth of his declaration.

“ When Sir Francis embarked for England, the government naturally devolved upon him. He immediately cast off the mask, and appeared the avowed advocate of ministerial oppression. This you will easily perceive by the tenor of his speeches, and the general conduct of his administration. But an anecdote, which I am confident you have never heard, will serve to convince you of his arbitrary principles. He one day last spring dined at a gentleman’s house, where the conversation turned upon the propriety of Great Britain’s taxing the colonies. Mr. H——, turning to the Lieutenant-Governor, said, ‘ Pray, Sir, do you think, if the Parliament of Great Britain should pass a law to deprive me of my estate, without my having been guilty of any crime to forfeit it, that I should be bound in duty and loyalty to comply ? ’ He answered,

very solemnly and seriously, 'Without doubt, Sir.' "

For nearly three years from this time, Mr. Palfrey's attention seems to have been chiefly occupied by his private affairs. It is not necessary to ascribe this retirement from political concerns to the vexation and despondency expressed in the first paragraph of the above extract.\* There was a pause in the great political action, each party waiting for the other's next move. Substantially, the great question of taxation had, for the present, been disposed of by the repeal, April 12th, 1770, of all the import duties of 1767, except that on tea, which was avoided by the agreements not to trade in or use the article. And with the discontinuance of the non-importation agreements, commerce between the colonies and the parent country had been resuming its accustomed channels and its former activity.

On the 1st of January, 1771, he embarked for England. In a letter at parting, concerning some business of Colonel Hancock, with which he was charged, that gentleman says, "Undoubtedly the

---

\* In September, 1772, Mr. Palfrey was recalled home from a journey to Connecticut, which he had intended to pursue to New York, by the death, during his absence, of two children in the same week. He was slow in recovering from this affliction so as to resume his former pursuits.

non-importation plan will be much the subject of conversation, and my name, perhaps, will be frequently and freely used. On this subject I would desire you to state matters fairly, and, with respect to me, to state the truth; and if that prevails, I am easy. I recommend to you to be prudent in all your conduct, particularly with regard to America, that you may honor yourself and your country."

He landed at Deal on the 1st of February, and reached London after a journey of two days through Canterbury and Rochester. In London he passed two agreeable months, in a round of business, sight-seeing, and society. Stopping on the way at Bath, Oxford, Woodstock, and other places of interest, he went for a few days to Bristol, the chief mart, after London, of colonial commerce at that time, and for several years within the present century, till its importance was eclipsed by the sudden growth of Liverpool. His remarks on what came under his rapid notice are those of an intelligent and right-minded traveller, fresh from the humility of a provincial capital, but not so dazzled by the magnificence, nor so fretted by the abuses, now for the first time revealed to his view, as to be disabled for a fair estimate of these exciting aspects of social condition.

At London he was received with flattering at-

tention by Hayley, Wilkes, Temple, and others of their way of thinking upon politics. He shared in the sensation occasioned by the committal of the Lord Mayor to the Tower, and the summons of Wilkes, now an alderman, to the bar of the House of Commons, for apprehending the officers of the House when sent into the city to arrest the printer, Wheble, for an alleged breach of privilege in publishing certain speeches made in Parliament. From a hint of his in a letter to Hancock, dated February 15th, it appears probable that Temple was already acquainted with the famous letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, and others, to Whately, which Temple was charged with having communicated to Franklin the following year, for transmission to America. "Mr. Temple," he says, "tells me that it would amaze any person to be informed of the misrepresentations, which have been made for four or five years past to the ministry, by persons on your side the Atlantic. I hope it will all come out in time."

A few days after, he wrote to the same gentleman, "There has been some talk of an intention to move for the repeal of the Tea Act; but the people in general are of opinion it will not take effect. But you may rely upon it, no additional tax will be laid, nor any attempts made to alter the present constitution of our



government. There has been an attempt to erect the Province of Maine into a new government ; but as it could not be done without annihilating our charter, Lord Hillsborough has declared he would have nothing to do with it. You may therefore set your domestic enemies at defiance, for administration have not the least inclination to involve Great Britain in a new dispute with her colonies ; their last attempt gave them too much trouble, and the nobility here are naturally very indolent. Lord Hillsborough has lately declared he is now sensible the colonies pay a sufficient duty upon the articles of consumption imported from Great Britain, and that no further tax shall be laid upon them. Still, no great dependence is to be put on the faith of a minister. The next in power may have different sentiments."

Mr. Palfrey embarked at Gravesend on the 3d of April, and arrived at Boston on the 9th of the following month. The last important entry in his journal, before leaving London, is as follows.

" *March 30th.* Spent an hour in conversation with Mr. Temple on our public affairs. He assured me he had it from the best authority, that no attempt would be again made to distress us ; that Lord Hillsborough saw things in quite a different light from what he formerly did. He said

we might depend upon it, the ministry were disposed to soften matters, but would do it in such a manner as to save the appearance of a control upon the colonies; that we were highly blamed by Colonel Barré, Dr. Franklin, and Dr. Johnson, and all the friends of America, for relaxing the non-importation agreement. He said we had the game in our own hands, and might have played it to our own advantage, if honesty and unanimity had prevailed among us. He further said that Lord Hillsborough was sensible the enemies of America had misrepresented it in order to serve their own purposes, and that he was determined to provide for no more such; that in the course of twelve or eighteen months the Castle would be returned;\* that he was determined, before he left England, that he would horsewhip Governor Bernard, and that he had told Lord Hillsborough the same, and insinuated that Lord Hillsborough was well acquainted with Bernard's villany; that things were viewed in a much more favorable light for America here than we generally imagined, and that we might depend upon it, no attempt would be made upon our

---

\* The Castle, now Fort Independence, had always been garrisoned by provincial troops, and commanded by the Lieutenant-Governor, till, in 1770, Governor Hutchinson, in conformity with his instructions from home, gave it up to a party of regular troops.

charter, or to alter our present form of government. He gave me to understand, that he could inform me of some things, now in agitation, that would give me great pleasure ; that he was not at liberty to make them public at present, but I should soon hear."

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

*Committees of Correspondence. — Letter from Colonel Harrison. — Intimacy with Henry Cruger. — Correspondence with George Rome. — Letter of Rome, transmitted with the Hutchinson Letters. — Arrival of the East India Company's Tea-Ships at Boston. — Journey to, and Letters from, New York and Philadelphia, on the Business of the Tea.*

THE controversy, in 1772, between Hutchinson and the Massachusetts patriots, respecting the new arrangement for the support of the Governor and Judges by the Crown, led to the very important measure of the establishment of committees of correspondence, the basis of the subsequent union of the colonies. It appears

that the early action of the Assembly of Virginia, the first on the continent to respond to the proposal, was owing to the prompt intelligence conveyed by the subject of this memoir. The communication on the subject quoted by Hutchinson,\* as "from a gentleman of distinction in Virginia to his friend in Boston," is an extract from a letter of Benjamin Harrison to Palfrey, dated March 14th, 1773. Harrison informs his friend of the death of Colonel Eyre, of whom he says, "Our country has sustained a great loss in this gentleman. We had few men of more sense among us, or that would have gone greater lengths to support the liberties of America. I feel his loss very sensibly. A similarity of sentiments introduced us to each other, and cemented a friendship that nothing but death could have put an end to." And then follows the passage cited by Hutchinson.†

In the summer of 1773, Mr. Palfrey was gratified by a visit from his friend Henry Cruger. With this gentleman, during his short stay at Bristol, he had formed an acquaintance which immediately led to a constant corre-

---

\* History, Vol. III. p. 392, note.

† The Boston committee of correspondence sent this extract, with a copy of the Virginia Resolutions, to all the corresponding towns and provinces.

spondence and a close intimacy. Cruger, a native of New York, was at this time the head of a great commercial house in Bristol.\* He passed a year and a half in looking after debts in this country, which, he wrote to his friend, amounted to nearly one hundred thousand pounds sterling; an agreeable illustration of the confidence which had not ceased to be reposed in American traders, under all the disadvantages of those unsettled and threatening times. Soon after his return home, Cruger became the colleague of Edmund Burke, in the representation of Bristol in Parliament. It is of him that the story is told, that, being called out after one of the magnificent speeches of his associate, he found himself prepared with nothing better than

---

\* He was grandson of a former mayor, and son of an opulent merchant, of New York. After graduating at King's, now Columbia College, he had gone to Europe, in the first instance, for purposes of travel. He was twice re-elected to Parliament, and was afterwards chosen Mayor of Bristol. After the peace, he returned to New York, where he continued to reside till his death at an advanced age. He was elected to the state Senate, and served in that office. His widow is still living. Judge Oakley, formerly Attorney-General of the state, and member of Congress, now Judge of the Superior Court of New York city, married his daughter. For most of the facts in this note, the writer is indebted to his learned friend, George Folsom, of New York.

to "say *ditto* to Mr. Burke."\* He was, of course, no fellow for that great man in his own high walk; but he was a person of sense, spirit, various knowledge, and a noble frankness and friendliness of character.†

In a visit to Providence, in March, 1773, Mr. Palfrey had made the acquaintance of George Rome, of Newport, with whom he carried on a large business, connected with the whale fishery, through that year and the following. Rome

---

\* Prior's *Life of Burke*, Ch. V. The story is almost too good to spoil; but Cruger probably spoke first on that occasion. He was not a man to match Edmund Burke; but he was not a man to say *ditto* to any body. His published letters to Peter Van Schaack, who married his sister, show a fine and cultivated understanding, as well as a warm heart. (*Life of Van Schaack*, pp. 30, 35, 43, 44.) He could speak too. Vardill, a correspondent of Van Schaack, wrote that, during his first speech in Parliament, Flood, the Irish orator, declared him to be speaking "more eloquently than any man he had yet heard in the house." And Mr. Garrick said, he "never saw human nature more amiably displayed than in the modest address, pathos of affection for his country, and graceful gesture, discovered by Mr. Cruger in his speech." This speech is given in Van Schaack's *Life*, pp. 31-34. But another, in a higher style, was that on Mr. Fox's motion for "an inquiry into the causes of the ill success of his Majesty's arms in North America."

† On one occasion, Palfrey had made some purchases for Cruger to the amount of five thousand pounds sterling, and drawn on his house in Bristol for the money. The

was an English merchant, settled in Rhode Island since 1761. It seems he had not been successful, to his wish, in collecting debts due to his English correspondents; and, under the sting of this disappointment, he, on the 22d of December, 1767, wrote a letter to a friend in New London, Dr. Moffat, in which, after inviting him to a Christmas dinner, he went on to reflect severely on the administration of justice in the colonies, extending his remarks to what he considered the vices of their political constitution, and the compendious remedies, which in his opinion should be applied by the authorities at home. It was the production, no doubt, of an excited partisan, though of a man of intelligence and information, and of one who had some excuse, in his private griefs, for a harsh judgment on public matters.

---

bills had no sooner gone, than he had a letter from Cruger, indicating that there had been some misapprehension concerning the instructions intended to be given, and he wrote back expressing his anxiety lest the Bristol house should protest the draughts. Cruger's answer was characteristic. "Your uneasiness respecting the fate of your bills gave me much concern. The serious attention I always pay to the welfare of my friends, you shall be better acquainted with in less than a hundred years hence. Believe me, Palfrey, no man's interest or reputation can ever suffer by being in my hands. Set your heart at rest; my partner will have orders to accept your bills, and they will be duly paid, though the sum of them were fifty thousand pounds."

But whether more or less judicious or exceptionable, it was, after all, the private letter of friend to friend, not designed, as far as appears, to reach any political circle, or exert any influence on public affairs; and whatever may be thought of the course taken with the letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, and the commissioners, as being the correspondence of public officers, the language of Wedderburne before the Privy Council, when he described the hard case of poor Rome, will not, to the calm reader at this distant day, appear unreasonably strong.

How Rome's letter came into Whately's possession, or indeed whether it was ever there, does not now appear. But, at all events, in the autumn of 1772, Dr. Franklin sent it with the rest to Boston, where, in June of the following year, their contents became publicly known. Upon the letter of Rome, the Massachusetts House of Representatives resolved, "that it has been the misfortune of this government, from the earliest period of it, from time to time, to be secretly traduced and maliciously represented to the British ministry, by persons who were neither friendly to this colony nor to the English constitution;" and there, so far as he was concerned, they let the matter rest. The Rhode Island Assembly took it up in a more practical way. Not having the autograph in their pos-



session, they called on him to acknowledge the genuineness of the printed letter, and when he declined to answer, committed him to prison. They continued to harass him with threats of a prosecution for libel, a proceeding which it is not easy to see how the facts, in any interpretation, could be considered capable of sustaining.

While these measures were in progress, it was an object with Rome to obtain possession of the evidence of which such serious use was threatened to be made against him, and he applied to Palfrey with the request to send him the letter. This the latter of course declined, but he did not disguise the displeasure with which he looked on the transaction. Ardent Son of Liberty as he was, he thought Rome ill-used, and he was not of a temperament to be false to his friendships or his sense of justice, out of regard to his popularity. "Although," he said, "I have ever been for maintaining and supporting our civil liberties, yet I am far from condemning every person that differs from me in sentiment. Every man, in my opinion, has a right of private judgment; but then he is to judge for himself alone. I am clearly of opinion, that the letter to Mr. Moffat, being from one private gentleman, expressing his sentiments, to another, without any manifest inten-

tion of its going further, cannot be chargeable with that degree of criminality with those who wrote with a professed design that their letters should take effect. This matter ought to have been properly distinguished by our honorable House of Representatives, as by their resolves it does not appear but that the letter was wrote to some person in England, who made use of it in Parliament."

On receiving a copy of the proceedings of the Rhode Island Assembly, he wrote, "I have shown it to several persons of both parties, who all agree, that they have not only exceeded the bounds of their own authority, but also those of natural justice. Colonel Hancock says, that he thinks your answers polite and pertinent; that our Assembly would not have dared to proceed to such lengths; and that, in any other colony but yours, you would undoubtedly have a good action against every person concerned in your commitment." And in the height of the excitement, he urged Rome to come to Boston, and to make his own house his home.

The year 1773 brought the beginning of the end of the contest of votes and arguments. People out of Massachusetts, on both sides of the water, have been apt to think, when any *sum* of her public policy was in hand, that a mercenary selfishness might be reckoned on as

one of its elements ; and when the sum has come to be wrought, they have generally found, to their disappointment, that that important element has somehow or other slipped out.

The East India Company were invested with the privilege of shipping their teas free of all export duty, which duty was of greater amount than that payable on importation in America. By reason of the diminished exportation of late years, the Company had on hand a large stock of that article, amounting to no less than seventeen millions of pounds, for which they were looking for a market. Relieved from the export duty, it could be afforded in America, even if the import duty there were paid, at a lower rate than it had hitherto commanded ; and it was hoped this bribe would be sufficient to seduce the people of the colonies from that obstinate disuse of an accustomed luxury, by which hitherto that duty, the only remaining vestige of the system of colonial taxation, had been rendered of no effect. With these calculations, the experiment of sending some Company's tea ships was tried ; all the world knows with what success.

The ships were expected all through the autumn. On the 29th of November, Palfrey wrote to Rhode Island, " Captain Hall is arrived with the tea, and is now at anchor between two men-of-war ; what will be the event, is yet in

the womb of fate." It came to the birth on the 16th of December.

He heard of it while absent from home, having been despatched by the committee of Boston, immediately on the arrival of the Dartmouth, to confer on the subject with the committee of Philadelphia, and the friends of the cause in New York, at which place there was no committee. From Philadelphia he wrote,

"The people here are, to a man, united in the common cause. No party divisions, no secret, underhand influence, divide or distract their counsels; but, cool and deliberate, though resolute and determined, they plan and execute without the least opposition. It is said the tea ship is at the Capes, and no pilot will bring her up. If by any means she gets up to the city, she will most certainly be burned. They are determined she shall return without being admitted to an entry. When I was at York, I forwarded the committee's letter to Mr. Mifflin by the post, for the sake of quicker despatch. It was immediately read in the public coffee-house, and so great was the joy of the people on the occasion, that they caused the bells to be rung. The gentlemen, both here and at York, are highly pleased with the behavior of my fellow-citizens. Do, my good Sir, strongly recommend a steady, uniform conduct. Let

nothing be concluded upon but what you will, if occasion requires, carry into execution. For, believe me, Sir, and you will most assuredly find what I say to be true, if by any means you should relax, or fall back in any degree from your late resolutions, you will be a scorn and reproach among your neighbors, and never, never more be able to retrieve the public confidence. Now is the time to convince the world, that the people of Boston can act with virtue and resolution." He recommended to the Boston committee to write to New York, and urge strongly the appointment of a committee in that place, as the Philadelphia committee, at his instance, had also undertaken to do.

"They suffer greatly at York," he adds, "from their religious disputes." To Colonel Broome, of that city, he wrote from Philadelphia, "I most sincerely wish the gentlemen of New York would fix a committee of correspondence. It is most essentially necessary, at this critical juncture, when the fate of America seems suspended in an equal balance; as thereby a line of communication would be kept up, which might add great weight to the common cause, and tend to defeat the design of our enemies. The citizens of Boston and Philadelphia having firmly determined to send back the tea, it is much to be lamented that our brethren at New

York do not adopt similar measures. To suffer that accursed article to be landed, is a step that will be attended with innumerable evil consequences. It will certainly subject you to the payment of the duty, which is the very thing we are all struggling to avoid. It will make a bad precedent for the interposition of an arbitrary military power in all cases where a subservient Governor shall take it in his head to conceit that the revenue is interested. It may put it in the power of our enemies to defeat all our purposes by privately disposing of the tea.

“But, above all, it will differ from the plan adopted by the other colonies; and of how much importance it is that we should pursue the same uniform mode of opposition, I submit to your most serious consideration. I could add many more reasons; but what I have already offered will, I think, suffice to show that *at all events* the tea ought to be sent back. I would not presume to dictate. You will undoubtedly pursue measures best adapted to your local circumstances, and most likely to answer the purposes we wish to accomplish.”

## CHAPTER V.

*Letters on the Tea Case. — Letter from Charles Thomson. — Boston Port Bill. — Spirit of the Bostonians. — Indiscretion of the Ministry. — Encouragement from other Towns and Colonies. — First Continental Congress. — Voyage to South Carolina and England. — Its Object. — Arrival at Nantucket soon after the Battle of Bunker's Hill.*

FROM Boston, on his return, Mr. Palfrey wrote to Thomas Mifflin, "A dead calm has succeeded our late political storm. The destruction of the tea has quieted the minds of those, who feared lest the admission of it should prove the *coup-de-grace* to American freedom. The united efforts of all the colonies must, in the end, work out our political salvation. You are sensible of how great importance it is that such a union should be maintained. Every nerve of our enemies will be strained to divide us, in order the better to govern us. What cannot be done by open violence, they will endeavor to effect by cunning and artifice. We must therefore strive to guard against all such attacks. Let no jealousies or mistrust of each other take place. This is a game they have heretofore played with

success, and are ready to catch at every advantage which the folly or avarice of a few interested individuals may sometimes chance to furnish them with."

"Should any more tea be sent, subject to a duty," he wrote to Broome at New York, "depend upon it the sales will be made up in the same manner as before." "A noble stand has been made," he said to one of his London correspondents, "which will in its consequences either involve us in a civil war, or emancipate us from the taxation so unjustly exercised over us by the British Parliament." His ardor, and that of his associates at home, inspired anxiety on the part of not a few of their judicious friends. "My dear friend," wrote Charles Thomson to him, "the storm thickens. May God grant us prudence! I hope nothing will be done with you to precipitate matters. Be assured the time is not yet come. Prudence, perseverance, and unanimity, will work wonders. True magnanimity is as much displayed at times by forbearance and patience, as by what the world deem bold acts."

The storm did thicken, fast and black. On the 7th of March, 1774, Parliament was informed, by a speech from the throne, of the destruction of the tea. The Boston Port Bill, so called, which prohibited all vessels from



taking in or discharging a cargo in that harbor, was immediately passed, and reached Boston the second week in May, its execution to be enforced by a blockading fleet, from and after the first day of June. It was a tremendous act of vengeance. All the prosperity of that thriving town, then consisting of seventeen or eighteen thousand inhabitants, depended upon commerce.\* Rents fell flat; labor was left without employment; property lay dead on the hands of the holders; the creditor could not collect his dues, because the debtor could not earn.

All was lost but honor; that was clung to, the more. "Nothing," writes Palfrey to Cruger, on the 18th of May, "can be more truly melancholy than the present situation of our unhappy town; but still," he adds, "the people keep up their spirits, and are determined not to bow their necks to the yoke, whatever distresses they may suffer. Some persons have proposed that the colonies should stop payment. The proposal is rejected here with indignation. They are determined to do nothing that shall be deemed unjust or dishonorable, but make a firm and manly opposition, and leave the event to Providence."

---

\* The entries, the previous year, had been five hundred and eighty-seven in number; the clearances, four hundred and eleven.

The days of American repudiation were not yet. And already a light was dawning from the dismal gloom. "Instead of ringing changes," wrote Silas Downer to Palfrey from Providence, July 12th, "on the words 'distressed,' 'oppressed,' 'abused,' 'miserable,' with many more of the like kind, which of late have been often applied to the people of Boston, I felicitate you upon the happy symptoms which attend America, upon her late great deliverance. *The time is come, so dreaded by Great Britain, that we are independent.* By the passing of the late acts in the British Parliament, every tie is cut, and we are set adrift. Doubtless, after so great a birth, there will be pains. But, thanks to God, appearances are much more favorable than could have been expected. The people are everywhere more and more illuminated respecting their case, and the firmest union cannot fail taking place."

That union was greatly facilitated by the bad management of the ministry. Providence seems to delight in confounding the schemes of tyranny, through the inconsiderate haste and passion of their projectors. How far the crushing blow inflicted upon Boston, had it been left alone to do its work, might have struck terror into the other ports and colonies, or how far, under circumstances so dispiriting, the whole people might

have been found true to honor and duty, and persisting to make a common cause, can never now be known. The ministry foolishly forgot, at this most important crisis, their policy to divide and conquer. The Boston Port Bill was immediately followed by an "Act for the better regulating the government of Massachusetts;" which, setting aside the charter, gave the appointment of counsellors, judges, and other high officers, to the Crown; forbade town meetings, except under certain sharp restrictions; and in other material ways abridged the ancient privileges of the people. To this, with a view to guard against the disorders which it might probably occasion, succeeded a law authorizing the Governor to send to another colony, or to Great Britain, for trial, any person under indictment for murder, or other capital offences, committed in aid of the magistracy. And a fourth act remodelled the government of the province of Quebec.

It might have almost seemed, that when, in the distresses and alarms of the time, the mutual fidelity of the colonies might be wavering, it had been the purpose of the ministry, in this series of measures, to warn the other colonies that the cause of the capital of Massachusetts was their own. To this use, at all events, the vigilant Sons of Liberty did not fail to put it. It

is not merely Boston, they said, which is to be punished for a disorderly act. The plan is vastly more extensive and perfidious. The ministry has taken heart, and has begun to reduce us all to a miserable submission. If the chartered franchises of Massachusetts can be invaded, as they are by the "regulating" act, so can, and so will, those of the other colonies. If any miscreant, who may stain his hands with our blood at the behest of a royal Governor, may be taken away from the justice of our courts, our lives are not worth a pin's fee. The act changing the constitution of Quebec is at once a precedent, which will not be suffered to sleep, for like usurpation upon us, and an instrument for preparing the outlandish people of that province to be made use of, when it shall please Parliament, for our subjugation.

Such considerations secured to Boston and Massachusetts the sympathy of the other towns and colonies. Salem told the Governor she could not stoop to derive any benefit from the distresses of the rival town. The people of Marblehead offered to receive the Boston ships, and load and unload them without charge. Votes, letters, and addresses of encouragement, and contributions for the relief of the poor, poured into Boston from various parts of the continent. And such was the view which came to be

taken of the exigencies of the time, as to lead to arrangements for the First Continental Congress. It met at Philadelphia on the 4th of September, three months from the first operation of the Port Bill, and adjourned, after an important session of eight weeks, having recommended the meeting of a similar assembly in the following May.

About the time of the meeting of the Congress, Mr. Palfrey informed one of his correspondents that he was presently going abroad. On the 1st of December, he embarked at Salem, in a ship of Mr. Hancock's, for Charleston, South Carolina. He remained there till a few days after the opening of the Provincial Congress on the 11th of January, and then sailed for London, where he arrived at the close of February, and stayed till the first week in May, including a visit of a few days to Bristol.

The editor of Washington's writings supposes that he made this voyage partly on public business.\* None of his papers, known to the writer of this sketch, afford positive confirmation of that opinion; but all the probabilities of the case appear strongly to favor it. Of course, he did not leave his home and family at this critical juncture without some important object.

---

\* Sparks's *Washington*, Vol. III. p. 158.

What was it? Not, apparently, a commercial enterprise. In Hancock's short letter to him at parting, he is simply desired to use his "best endeavors at Charleston to obtain a freight for the ship," which, the writer says, "I could wish to have for London or Bristol, and hope you will be able to effect it." A freight was obtained at Charleston for London, but he does not appear to have had any charge of, or interest in it; and when he returned to America, it was as passenger in another vessel. His papers of the time contain no record of any business operations; neither of purchases nor sales, arrangements of past transactions, with a single immaterial exception, nor provisions for future. Indeed, business for the present was out of the question; for the agreement recommended by the Congress, "not to import into British America, from Great Britain or Ireland, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever," had gone into effect several weeks before he sailed for Europe.

In respect to political allusions, his letters and journal of the period are equally barren. They record nothing but his visits from day to day to his friends, and to places of public amusement, and such like employments of his time; a reserve which is the more observable when contrasted with the fulness of his records in the same place four years before, when the situation

of affairs was far less interesting, and when, a comparatively young and untried man, he must be supposed to have had less of the confidence of the political leaders of his school. Wilkes, his old correspondent, was now Lord Mayor, and a county member; his friend Hayley, and Cruger, his friend as intimate as a brother, were also in Parliament. They did not talk of nothing with him when they met; nor was the subject, the uppermost in the minds of all, the only one they did not exchange thoughts upon. Just before he reached London, Lord Chatham had moved his address to the King for the removal of the troops, and his provisional act for settling the troubles in America; the province agents had been refused a hearing on the petition of Congress; Lord North's bill, "To restrain the trade and commerce of the New England provinces," had been passed. He was in London when Mr. Burke's plan of conciliation was offered and rejected. He makes minutes of his interviews with one and another leader of opposition, while these things were going on, but not of one word of the conversation that may have passed respecting the character and effect of such vital measures.

It is not likely that the person, who, a year before, had been sent to New York and Phila-

delphia with a confidential communication from the Boston committee of correspondence, was suffered at this juncture to go to South Carolina and to England without any messages of similar tenor. The Provincial Congress of South Carolina was to meet soon after his arrival there, and its concurrence with the measures of the northern colonies was considered to be of the utmost consequence; a fact which had been singularly evidenced by the exception of its great staple of rice in the *non-exportation* agreement proposed by the Continental Congress to go into effect the following year.

Josiah Quincy, Jr., who left London for home three or four days after Palfrey's arrival there, had been sent out to confer with the friends of America. But he had gone abroad before the meeting of the Continental Congress, and more recent intelligence than he had to convey of the private views and feelings of the American patriots might be thought desirable to be communicated in England, that returns might be made for the use of the Congress which was to meet in May; besides which, his health, known by this time to be rapidly failing, forbade any confident expectation of his being able to survive the return voyage. And supposing an object of the kind here suggested to have been in hand,



the silence of Palfrey's papers concerning it is abundantly explained. The communications to be made were such as it would not have been judicious to commit to writing.\*

From vessels spoken at sea, on his return voyage, he heard vague accounts of the battles of Lexington and Bunker's Hill. From Marlborough, in Middlesex county, thirty miles west of Boston, he wrote on the 2d of July to Hancock, then in Congress, at Philadelphia.

"After a fatiguing passage of seven weeks from London, I arrived the 26th ult. at Nantucket, and, after four or five days' diligent search, had the happiness to find Mrs. Palfrey and three

---

\* Says Quincy, in his Journal, "My most intimate friends insist upon my going directly to Boston. They say, no letters can go with safety, and that I can deliver more information and advice *viva voce*, than could or ought to be written." *Memoir of the Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr.* p. 340. "I wish I might, with propriety, enter his [Dr. Franklin's] discourse." *Ibid.* p. 341. "It appeared of high importance that the sentiments of such persons should be known in America. To commit their sentiments to writing, was neither practicable nor prudent at this time." *Ibid.* p. 347.

The following entry in the Journal of the Third Massachusetts Congress, for June 29th, 1775, bears upon this point. "Mr. Palfrey was introduced to this Congress, who brought with him a number of letters, which were brought from England by Captain Jenkins; Ordered, that Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Phillips, and Colonel Farley, be a committee to supervise the letters brought to this Congress by Mr.

of our children at a snug retreat in this town, where they seem to be very easy and contented, considering our great change in circumstances and situation. She has saved all her necessary clothing and linen, what plate we had, and some of our beds. The greatest part of our furniture is left behind. But, amidst all our difficulties and embarrassments, I hear not the least murmur or complaint. Mrs. Palfrey thinks and says, with me, that, if we do but get the day, it will be but a small sacrifice to lose what little we have in the world."

Such was the way of thinking of the matrons of the revolution. Mrs. Palfrey gave birth to

---

Palfrey." "By Captain Jenkins," in the phrase of that time, means, by the vessel under his command.

In the forthcoming volume of Force's *American Archives* (Vol. VI. pp. 508 - 510) is a very curious letter to Palfrey, without a signature, dated "Bristol, February 16th, 1776." It contains a full communication of facts important to be known in America, and looks like a result of arrangements for correspondence established the year before. In communicating it, Mr. Palfrey informs the President of Congress, that it is "from a man of character and note in Bristol (not Mr. Cruger) particularly connected with Alderman Bull." A short letter, the following year, from one Thomas Mullett, a friend of American liberty, at Bristol, refers to a previous communication, of the arrival of which the writer continued to be uninformed. That the letter of February 16th, 1776, may have been from this source, is of course merely thrown out as a conjecture.

an infant not long before the Lexington fight, and was unable to leave Boston till after the vexatious restrictions on the removal of inhabitants, with their effects, had been adopted by General Gage. On the 23d of May, as appears from a minute of the money paid, she left a home of elegance and plenty, with four little children, and as much property as four shillings would pay for carting from Water Street down to Charlestown Ferry.\*

---

\* Soon after rejoining his family, Mr. Palfrey made an inventory of their effects left in Boston. It is an exact detail of the articles of furniture in each room of the house, with the value of each carried out into a column. One article, however, he could not appraise; the entry is, "One oval plaister of Paris, of John Wilkes, Esq., given me by his sister, *inestimable*."

## CHAPTER VI.

*Aid-de-Camp to General Charles Lee. — Arrest of Tories at Portsmouth. — Expedition to Rhode Island. — Capture of the Nancy Transport. — Chaplain at Cambridge. — Lee at New York. — Palfrey Aid-de-Camp to Washington. — The Army at New York. — Paymaster-General. — Official Relations. — Organization of the Department. — Invoices of Money. — Difficulty of adjusting Means to Ends. — Visit to Lord Howe. — Military Chest at Kingsbridge. — Retreat through New Jersey. — Imperturbable Temper of the Commander-in-Chief. — Capture of Lee. — Battle of Trenton, and Restoration of Affairs.*

ON the 1st of July, General Washington passed through Worcester, on his way to the army at Cambridge. Mr. Palfrey waited upon him there, and, two days after, went down to camp, where he was immediately appointed aid to General Charles Lee; a flattering introduction to the army, especially as being conferred, by an officer whose experience in the wars of Europe had made him a refined martinet, on one who brought to the new rank only the qualifications of a bright mother-wit, and such military knowl-

edge as was to be acquired in the company of Cadets. The army, during the following months, lay around Boston, in a line twelve miles or more in length, the Major-Generals being posted, Ward on the right, at Roxbury, with nine Massachusetts regiments and a portion of the Connecticut troops; Putnam, with the remainder of the Massachusetts and Connecticut regiments, at Cambridge, where were also head-quarters; and Lee on the left, at Charlestown and Medford, with the troops from New Hampshire and Rhode Island, his quarters being generally at the "Royal Farm." The main body of the British were on Bunker's Hill, while another division occupied works thrown up on Boston Neck.

The chief business of the summer was procuring stores and ammunition, and organizing and disciplining the hasty levies into something of the condition of an army. Major Palfrey was in the action of the 28th of August, in which Lee obtained possession of Ploughed Hill, within half a mile of the British lines in Charlestown. Two months after, he was sent to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to arrest the government officers in that town.\*

---

\* His instructions for this expedition are printed in Sparks's *Washington*, Vol. III. p. 158. Lee's letter, enclosing the General's, is characteristic of the spirited pen to which have been sometimes attributed the Letters of Ju-

In December, he accompanied General Lee to Rhode Island, on the expedition to protect the people of that colony against the troops landed by Commodore Wallace. He had previously been despatched to Salem and Cape Ann, to secure the prizes sent in by Captain Manly, one of which, a heavy transport, laden with ordnance stores from Woolwich, afforded a most seasonable supply of the *matériel* of war. On this occasion, Washington's secretary was directed to inform him that his "activity and

---

nus. "November 5th, 1775. Dear Palfrey; Enclosed I send you General Washington's letter. The sentiments are those of the whole body of general officers. You must be careful that you make a distinction. If any of those placemen have by their late conduct given reason to think they are converted, you must let them vegetate in quiet. There is one thing not specified in the General's letter, which it is necessary the committee should not be ignorant of. It is, that they are to be considered as pledges of security for the seaport towns; that it should be made known to these piratical assassins that the first house set on fire by their ships shall be the funeral pile of a bunch of these, their worthy associates." (This seems to have been favorite language with Lee. He used the same the following winter in a letter to the hesitating Committee of Safety of New York. Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. 1. p. 78.) "You have heard, I suppose, of our taking Chamblee, and the almost certainty of our taking the whole country. The most comfortable reflection is, that it was performed chiefly by Canadians; so that they are in for the plate. Yours most sincerely."

conduct had merited his Excellency's approbation." And he wrote to his wife, "The business I was sent to do at Cape Ann I had the happiness to transact so much to the General's satisfaction, that he has assured me of his good offices for the first vacant post worth my acceptance ; and I expect soon to be appointed Barrack-Master-General."

To the same correspondent he wrote, on the 2d of January, "What think you of my turning parson? I yesterday, at the request of Mrs. Washington, performed divine service at the church at Cambridge. There was present the General and lady, Mrs. Gates, Mrs. Custis, and a number of others, and they were pleased to compliment me on my performance. I made a form of prayer, instead of the prayer for the King, which was much approved. I gave it to Mrs. Washington, at her desire, and did not keep a copy, but will get one and send it you."\*

---

\* It was afterwards obtained, and reads as follows ;

"O Lord our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings and Lord of lords, who hast made of one blood all the nations upon earth, and whose common bounty is liberally bestowed upon thy unworthy creatures ; most heartily we beseech thee to look down with mercy on his Majesty George the Third. Open his eyes and enlighten his understanding, that he may pursue the true interest of the people over whom thou, in thy providence, hast placed him. Remove far from him all wicked, corrupt men, and evil counsel-

On the 11th of January, General Lee was despatched to New York, to prepare for the reception there of a force, which, from various indications, appeared to be moving from Boston, and which was thought to be probably destined for that place. General Lee had it further in charge to inspect the fortifications on the North River, to disarm the numerous disaffected persons in that neighborhood, and by influence or coercion, as the case might be found to require, to correct the vacillating spirit of the authorities of that colony.

---

lors, that his throne may be established in justice and righteousness; and so replenish him with the grace of thy Holy Spirit that he may always incline to thy will and walk in thy way.

“Have pity, O most merciful Father, upon the distresses of the inhabitants of this Western World. Succeed and prosper their endeavors for the establishment of peace, liberty, and safety. To that end, we humbly pray thee to bless the Continental Congress. Preside over their councils, and may they be led to such measures as may tend to thy glory, to the advancement of true religion, and to the happiness and prosperity of thy people. We also pray thee to bless our Provincial Assemblies, magistrates, and all in subordinate places of power and trust. Be with thy servant, the Commander-in-chief of the American forces. Afford him thy presence in all his undertakings; strengthen him, that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies; and grant that we may, in thy due time, be restored to the enjoyment of those inestimable blessings we have been deprived of by the devices of cruel and bloodthirsty men, for the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”



He was delayed on the way by an attack of the gout, but was carried forward, in a litter, to New York. He reached that place on the 31st of January, and continued in command there till the 6th of March, when he was relieved by Lord Stirling.

During this interval, he had been expecting to be detached by Congress on a separate command in Canada, or the southern colonies. Before this question was settled, Major Palfrey was withdrawn from his service by an invitation into the family of Washington. He left New York - for head-quarters, about the middle of February, and was announced as aid-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief, in general orders of March 6th, the day of the occupation of Dorchester Heights.

His last entry in Lee's letter-book was of the date of the 8th of February, and in a fortnight after he wrote from the camp at Cambridge. He appears to have affected, at this period, the orator as well as the chaplain. There was, a few years ago, among his papers, an oration, now lost, commemorating the *Boston Massacre*, of March, 1770. As the speakers on this occasion, in Boston, before 1783, are known, and as, after the treaty of peace, the anniversary celebration gave place to that of the 4th of July, the address was probably prepared to be

delivered in camp this year; a purpose which was not fulfilled, in consequence of the army having in hand, at that time, the more important engagement of taking possession of Dorchester Heights.

In April, when the army broke up from Boston, he attended the General to New York. On the 27th of that month, by a vote of the Continental Congress, he was appointed Paymaster-General of the forces, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. This was as successor to Colonel Warren.\*

His post was, henceforward, with the main army. His official relations were with the President of Congress, the Commander-in-chief, the Board of War, the Continental Treasurer, his deputies in the several military departments, and the regimental paymasters. His correspondence with the Commander-in-chief, and with the Board of War, was, for the most part, conducted by and through Richard Peters, Secretary to the Board, and Colonel Harrison, General Washington's military Secretary.† The Continental

---

\* James Warren, of Plymouth, succeeded General Joseph Warren (killed at Bunker's Hill) as President of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress. He was elected Paymaster-General by the Continental Congress, July 27th, 1775. His resignation was communicated April 18th, 1776.

† Robert H. Harrison, appointed by the General, in No-

Treasurer was Michael Hillegas, of Philadelphia.\* The Board of War and Ordnance, which had "the care of forwarding all moneys to be transmitted for the public service by order of Congress," was, in its original organization, on the 12th of June, 1776, a committee of five members of Congress, constituted, at the first election, of John Adams, of Massachusetts; Roger Sherman, of Connecticut; Benjamin Harrison, of Virginia; James Wilson, of Pennsylvania; and Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina. The deputy paymaster-generals were John Pierce, Jr., attached to the Paymaster-General's office, and afterwards to the main army; Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. (son of the Governor of Connecticut)

---

vember, 1775, to be his aid-de-camp and secretary, had been previously known to him as a young lawyer in Alexandria. Washington had very few subordinates so able, and probably no man enjoyed his confidence more. On the adoption of the Federal Constitution, Harrison received from the President the commission of an associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. But he declined it, preferring to retain the place of Chancellor of Maryland.

\* Hillegas and George Clymer, of Pennsylvania, were chosen by Congress joint Treasurers of the United Colonies, July 29th, 1775. Clymer resigned August 6th, 1776, having been elected a member of Congress. Hillegas was continued in the place by annual elections, till the new organization of the departments, in 1781, when Robert Morris was made Superintendent of Finance.

for the northern department;\* Ebenezer Hancock (brother of John) for the eastern; John Baynton for the western; Benjamin Harrison, Jr. for Virginia; Richard Dallam for the flying camp; William Bedlow and Thomas Reed for New York; William Blount for North Carolina; John Lewis Gervais for South Carolina; and Joseph Clay for Georgia.

Down to the time of the appointment of Colonel Palfrey, there had scarcely been an army, except in the vicinity of Boston. From this period, operations were much extended, and with them the business of the pay-office, as well as of other departments of the general staff. During the summer, while the main army at New York remained unmolested by the enemy, the department appears to have been thoroughly organized, and the system to have been arranged, upon which, with some amendments at a later period, it continued to be administered through the war. At first, remittances of money for its

---

\* In the autumn of 1778, Trumbull resigned this office, being chosen (November 3d) by Congress Comptroller of the Treasury. In the spring of 1781, he became Secretary to the Commander-in-chief, on the resignation, by Robert H. Harrison, of that important place. He was afterwards a member and Speaker of the House of Representatives, during Washington's administration, and Governor of Connecticut.

use were made by the President of Congress; after the organization of the Board of War, they came from the Secretary, and subsequently from the Paymaster, of that Board. They were sent to the Paymaster-General, and by him to his deputies, or directly by the Board to the latter, under an escort of horse; and receipts were returned as soon as the money could be counted.

Very rarely, for particular purposes, and commonly then to a small amount, it consisted of hard coin. Generally, it was bundles of sheets of the continental paper money. The invoices exhibited the following particulars in successive columns; 1, the marks endorsed on the several parcels; 2, against each parcel, the number of sheets in each of the several rolls therein contained; 3, against each figure designating the number of sheets in a roll, the names of the signers; 4, the number of the *class* to which the sheets in each roll belonged, being the same number as that expressed on the face of the bill; 5, the number of the *delivery*, and, 6, the number of the *emission*, in which each roll originated; 7, the value of each sheet, expressed in dollars; and, 8, the total value of each roll.

The column headed *emission* relates to the successive issues of bills in pursuance of successive votes of the Congress, of which there were

more than thirty previous to 1780, when the wretched depreciation of this currency forbade any further resort to such expedients of finance.\* A portion only of the bills of each emission was passed over by the signers to the Treasurer, from time to time; and the part of the several emissions, to which each roll of bills belonged, is indicated by the figure in the column headed *delivery*. The signers were persons appointed for the purpose, first by votes of Congress, afterwards by the Board of Treasury. The denominations differed at different periods, ranging from one sixth of a dollar to eighty dollars. When the value of a sheet did not exceed ten dollars, the bills had but one signature. If above that sum, there were always two.

The Paymaster-General made up his accounts, and forwarded them to Congress, every week. They embraced in the first eleven months more than four millions and a half of dollars; a rate afterwards, of course, vastly in-

---

\* The first emission, of two millions of dollars, was in pursuance of a resolve of Congress, of the 22d of June, 1775. The second, of another million, was ordered the 25th of July; and the third, of three millions, four months afterwards. The credit of the united colonies was pledged for their redemption in successive annual payments of a million of dollars, on the 30th of November, the first to be made in the year 1779. *Journal of Congress*, July 29th, 1775.

creased. The amount was the least of the perplexity. Officers and soldiers, on service at a distance from their regiments, were constantly urging claims for pay under circumstances which would have made it a hardship to be denied; and the adjustment of a great number of these irregular accounts was a task requiring the utmost skill and patience. Officers on separate commands, invested with an authority not precisely defined, and officers holding double commissions, as in the line and staff at the same time, were apt to interpret their rights in a manner different from what the head of the pay-office could allow.

Congress and the Commander-in-chief had both too much business in hand to have time for settling all the principles for the determination of such questions, and it was a perpetual exercise of discretion and address, with the executive officer of the department, to protect the interests of the public, with as little disappointment and annoyance as might be to the claimants. Often there was a large amount of claims unquestionably valid, and for every one a needy and sturdy applicant, and no money to meet them with;\* and no amount of civil or urgent

---

\* "What little cash there is on hand I am obliged to keep to answer immediate contingent demands, while the soldiers are grumbling, I might say mutinying, for want

importunity would bring it from the Congress. And the position of perpetually dunning and being dunned, was one which required buoyant spirits to sustain it with gentleness and grace.

Sometimes it was of the utmost importance to command large sums within a time which allowed no other method of raising them except by drafts on the Continental Congress, when the standing of that patriotic body in the money-market was not at its height ; and on some occasions there was absolutely no way to negotiate such bills, except on the personal credit of the drawer, who was fortunately in good repute, but who had himself no more reason to count on the ultimate solvency of the treasury, than had the party that advanced the funds.

On the 30th of July, Colonel Palfrey, with a flag of truce, went on board the *Eagle*, the flag-ship of Lord Howe. On the following day he wrote an account of the interview to the President of Congress.

“We were treated,” he says, “with the utmost politeness and civility by Lord Howe, with whom we had a conference of near two hours. Nobody was present but his lordship and secretary, Mr. Tracey, and myself. He spoke with

---

of their pay.” *Paymaster-General's Letter to the President of Congress*, September 7th, 1776. This was a not uncommon strain.



the highest respect of General Washington, and lamented the nice distinctions which, he said, prevented his addressing General Washington by letter; said that he wished to convey his sentiments to him by letter in any mode of address that might prevent his being blamed by the King, his master; in all his discourse, called him '*General Washington*,' and frequently said, '*the States of America*.' Mr. Tracey delivered him a letter from Dr. Franklin, which he read. I watched his countenance, and observed him often to express marks of surprise. When he had finished reading it, he said his old friend had expressed himself very warmly; that when he had the pleasure of seeing him last in England, he made him acquainted with his sentiments respecting the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies, and of his earnest desire that a reconciliation might take place equally honorable and advantageous to both. Possessed with these sentiments, and the most ardent desire to be the means of effecting this union, he had accepted the honor the King had done him in appointing him one of the commissioners; that, very unfortunately, a long passage prevented his arriving here before the declaration of independence took place.

“He said the Congress had greatly hurt his

feelings by reminding him, in one of their publications, of the esteem and respect they had for the memory of his brother, and drawing, by manifest inference, a contrast between the survivors and the deceased. No man could feel more sensibly the respect shown to their family than his lordship and the general; they should always esteem America for it, and particularly the Massachusetts Bay, and added, 'I hope America will one day or other be convinced, that in our affection for that country we also are Howes.' His lordship, when speaking of his brother, was greatly affected, and I could perceive the tear start in his eye. His lordship hinted an inclination that I should take the letter for General Washington, with the addition of '&c. &c. &c.,' which, he said, would imply every thing that we could desire, and at the same time save him from censure. I gave him to understand, that as it had been before refused under the same circumstances, I could not with propriety receive it, especially as it was against the express direction of Congress.

"On the subject of an exchange of prisoners, his lordship told us that he had a letter by him which he had intended to deliver to Captain Banks, (if he had met with him,) to order him to send all the prisoners he had to the first

American port, and would trust to our honor to deliver him an equal number. He condemned, in the strongest terms, the behavior of those officers who had forfeited their paroles, and said they must blame themselves only for all the ill consequences that ensued; wished that some plan might be proposed for the more comfortable support of prisoners on both sides; said he would very willingly open an account with General Washington, and, if agreeable to him, would immediately send all the prisoners he had in his possession, and trust to General Washington's honor to return him an equal number, whenever it might suit his convenience.

“His lordship talked a great deal; but what I have here related is the substance of his conversation. I told him he had now a fair opportunity to mention to his friend Dr. Franklin, in a private letter, his design in coming out, and what his expectations from America were. This he declined; saying the doctor had grown too warm, and if he expressed his sentiments fully to him, he should only give him pain, which he would wish to avoid. When we parted, he desired his compliments to General Washington.”

In his agreeable quarters at Colonel Lispe-

nard's, on the North River, two miles above what then was the city, Colonel Palfrey was visited in July by his wife, who came in a one-horse chaise from Marlborough, with two of her children, the older ten years of age.\* There he remained till after the retreat from Long Island, when he was ordered with the military chest to the head-quarters of General Heath at Kingsbridge, near which he became the guest of Colonel Cortlandt. After the occupation of New York by the British forces, on the 15th of September, and the brilliant affair of the following day, which checked their further advance, active operations on both sides were suspended for some weeks.

During this time, a committee of Congress,

---

\* Colonel Palfrey had probably sent the intelligence of his promotion to his old friend General Lee, in Carolina, who, a few days after his affair at Sullivan's Island, wrote to him, "My dear Palfrey; The old observation, that money spoileth the wit, is not exemplified in you. On the contrary, you are grown more brilliant since you were master of five-and-twenty dollars per month. God inspire the Congress with the resolution of still increasing your store, that you may still become a more entertaining correspondent. We often long to laugh with the gallant Palfrey. You will hear of a snub we have given to Sir Peter Parker. I assure you it was hot business. My two aids-de-camp, Byrd and Morris, stand fire divinely. Upon my

consisting of Messrs. Sherman, Gerry, and Lewis, came to head-quarters to confer with the Commander-in-chief on the condition of affairs. By this committee, Colonel Palfrey was strongly urged to accept the post of Quartermaster to the main army, in the place of Colonel Moylan, who, though a valuable officer in the field, was not distinguished for administrative talent, and had given little satisfaction in a trust which, under existing circumstances, required the utmost efficiency. But he declined the appointment. "By what I can learn," he writes, "they will spare neither honor nor profit to induce me to accept it. But it is a troublesome office, and difficult to give satisfaction, which you know was always my highest ambition."

---

soul, they are punky lads. I must now entreat, my dear Mr. Paymaster, that you will assist Captain Grose, of Thompson's battalion, in unravelling the accounts of the men of the different regiments who composed my body-guards, as the great Mr. Ballard used to call them. If you do not assist, I must *Whitcombize*. Adieu, *mon cher ami*. My love to Moylan and Baylor, who, I hope, informs himself of the state of my mare." Hancock, who forwarded this letter from Philadelphia, endorsed it, "I have not time to write you. I have sent the General the whole account of the most fortunate defeat of the troops and ships at South Carolina. God Almighty be praised! I feel grateful."

On the 1st of October, Colonel Palfrey went to Boston. At his return, after four or five weeks, he found the Commander-in-chief at North Castle in the Highlands, the British being in possession of all the country below White Plains, except Fort Washington, which they invested and took presently after. He was directed to proceed at once with the chest higher up the river to Peekskill, which place he reached in as unencumbered a condition as the bravest independence could desire. "Mr. ——'s flight," he writes, "from Kingsbridge was so precipitate, and his fright so great, that he left my bed, bedstead, blankets, and sheets behind, with all my servant's clothes, and my saddle; so that I shall be obliged to lie on the floor all winter, as no such thing as a bed can possibly be procured. You need not send sheets, as I have now no use to put them to."

From Peekskill Colonel Palfrey was ordered, after a few days, to cross the Hudson, and proceed to head-quarters on the Hackinsac River, along which the daily diminishing remains of Washington's army were now in full retreat before the victorious foe. It so happened, that, just at this juncture, circumstances made it indispensable to consult the Commander-in-chief respecting several vexatious details of the pay-office;

and the answers came direct from himself with the same promptness, fulness, and exactness, as if that sublime mind had had no other care, instead of being pressed at the moment with every thing most suited to distract and overwhelm a human spirit. Harrison, his secretary, wrote often at this period, and always in a tone worthy of his noble soul. But in him, and others like him, nature would have its way. He could act like a hero, and "he thought as a sage, but he felt as a man." He wrote to Colonel Palfrey, on the 25th of November, "It will be difficult to stop General Howe in the career of victory. The last of this month, Beal's and Hand's brigades are no more; at the close of the year, the whole army. America is now trembling for her sons, and reproaching their rulers for the impolicy of their councils." This was at Newark. By the 30th, the army had been driven on to Brunswick, and then, in the conclusion of a full letter about some pay-rolls, he wrote, "I do not know that these abstracts should not have been paid elsewhere. I have not my abstract knowledge at this time, and I do not know that I should be unhappy, if I was without every other, and the powers of remembrance. Heaven grant us happiness, my friend!" This was natural, and not pusillani-

mous. It was unexceptionable, but it was not *Washingtonian*. Other men of the time were worthy of the cause; but there was only one frame robust enough to stand up without staggering beneath the prodigious burden of those calamities and cares.

On the 11th of December, Colonel Palfrey, on his way to rejoin the main army, was with General Lee at Morristown. "He was very urgent," writes the former, "for me to continue with him; but, he travelling very slow, and I being in a great hurry, left him, by which means I probably escaped being now in the hands of the enemy." On the 13th, at Baskingridge, General Lee, with an unaccountable departure from his usual prudence, lodged three miles from his division, with a small guard, and was surprised and carried off to the British camp, by a party of dragoons. He had had peremptory orders to proceed with his force to head-quarters with all possible speed, and his equivocal delay was afterwards understood to have been occasioned by a scheme to signalize himself by a different employment of his troops.

When Colonel Palfrey joined the army, after its retreat beyond the Delaware, his post was at Newtown. From this place, on the evening of the 26th of December, he wrote a full account of



the transactions of that memorable day, having gone with Colonel Harrison, in the morning, to Trenton Ferry, in order to cross the river with General Ewing's brigade. The tide had now turned; the unlooked-for success was rapidly followed up by a series of scarcely less brilliant adventures; and in less than three weeks, General Washington drew his troops into winter quarters at Morristown, having relieved Philadelphia, carried back the alarm to New York, cleared New Jersey of almost every British soldier, and, what was more than all, made courage and hope succeed to what had been almost despair in the bosoms of his countrymen, and won for them abroad a name for strength and constancy, which proved the basis of their final triumph.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Illness of Washington. — Board of Auditors of Army Accounts. — Battles of Brandywine and Germantown. — Winter Quarters at Valley Forge. — New Board of War. — Improvements in the Pay Department. — Battle of Monmouth Court House. — Visit to New England. — Intention to resign. — Return to Boston. — Domestic Affliction. — Depreciation of the Currency, and consequent Perplexities in the Pay-Office. — Unanimous Election to be Consul-General in France. — Embarkation at Chester. — Character and Family.*

IN March, Washington was alarmingly ill at Morristown, a circumstance which, it is believed, has not found its way into his biographies, but which deserves notice, on account of its affording another illustration of the resolution of his character. "We are all," wrote Colonel Palfrey on the 8th of March, "under great concern for poor General Washington, who is now confined to his bed with a fever. He has been unwell several days past, and took to his bed yesterday. Last night he was cupped in the head, and is something better to-day." Yet, on the 6th, 8th, and 10th, he was writing or dic-

tating the important letters of those dates, embraced in Mr. Sparks's collection.

Towards the close of March, Colonel Palfrey went to Philadelphia, to obtain a settlement of his accounts, and to urge an increase of compensation for the regimental paymasters, and the adoption of some further regulations for the better despatch of this branch of the public business. In these latter objects he was successful, as appears by votes of Congress of March 29th, and April 1st and 2d. By a vote of the 27th of March, he was referred, for a settlement, to a board of commissioners appointed the preceding summer, and then sitting at Hartford, in Connecticut. To Hartford accordingly he proceeded, and adjusted his accounts for the first eleven months. He found time for a visit of a few days to his family at Marlborough, and was again at camp near Bound Brook, on the Rariton, before the 30th of May.

The campaign of this year did not open till June, nor did any event of considerable importance occur till three months later. Through the summer, Washington was kept in uncertainty by the equivocal movements of Sir William Howe, and was marching and countermarching his army from the Highlands to the Delaware, according as the views of the British commander seemed to him to be directed towards New

England, Hudson's River, or Philadelphia. At length, on the 22d of August, he had certain advices that a British fleet of nearly two hundred sail was in Chesapeake Bay. They landed troops at the head of Elk River, and he took post a few miles below Wilmington, to oppose their passage to the city. On the 11th of September was fought the battle of the Brandywine, and on the 27th the British entered Philadelphia. Washington attacked them on the 4th of October, at Germantown, and the undecisive issue of that engagement terminated, for the main army, the active operations of the campaign. In December, it went into winter quarters at Valley Forge.

Till Congress was driven from Philadelphia, Colonel Palfrey had been the guest of the President in the city. He was with the army in the principal engagements; and from a letter, in which he complains of his private communications being published, it appears that a full account of the battle of the Brandywine, in Edes's Gazette of September 29th, was from his pen.

By a vote of Congress of the 17th of October, a new constitution was given to the Board of War. It was henceforward to be composed of three persons, not members of Congress, a number soon after increased to five, instead of consisting of a committee of that body, as here-

tofore. The powers of the Board were also enlarged and defined anew, and it was to have the services of a permanent secretary. The members first chosen were General Mifflin, Colonel Pickering, and Robert H. Harrison. Harrison having declined, General Gates, Joseph Trumbull, of Connecticut, and Richard Peters, were elected. General Gates, fresh from his laurels at Saratoga, was made president. Colonel Palfrey repaired to Congress, then sitting at York, and, with the aid of the new Board, obtained some important amendments in the system of his department. Special auditors were appointed for the accounts of the main army,\* and arrangements made for a more complete accountability of all persons intrusted with money

---

\* See *Journal of Congress*, for Jan. 10th, 13th, and 14th, and Feb. 6th, 1778. "The committee of Congress," wrote Palfrey to the General, Jan. 14th, "who are appointed to attend at the camp on business, will acquaint your Excellency with the cause of my detention at York. Give me leave to assure you I have not been idle. I have the pleasure to acquaint you two auditors are appointed, and I flatter myself the accounts of the army will soon be properly adjusted. Mr. Clarkson is a gentleman well acquainted with business, and Major Clarke is very sensible and active. A supply of cash could not be ready till the beginning of next week, and the Treasury Board desire me to stay and see it forwarded. Indeed, I should not meet a hearty welcome at the camp without it."

for the troops. A further improvement was made soon after, in the appointment of Joseph Nourse to be Secretary of Ordnance and Paymaster to the Board.\*

Colonel Palfrey's post was at Valley Forge through the winter. History has told, at length, how severe were the sufferings of this dismal period of the war. "We have been exceedingly distressed," he wrote, the 4th of March, "on many accounts; more especially for clothing and provisions. But I hope we shall wade through all our difficulties. If our army was not composed of the most virtuous set of people in the world, it would have been impossible to keep them together." Washington admired their fortitude not less, and applauded it not less warmly.† Officers, who had been used to

---

\* *Journal*, of Feb. 12th, 1778. This very worthy gentleman died in Georgetown, in the District of Columbia, only three years ago. He was appointed by Congress, on the 30th of May, 1779, Assistant Auditor-General, and on the 19th of September, 1781, Register of the Treasury. On the reorganization of the treasury department by the First Congress under the Federal Constitution, this office was retained, and on the 11th of September, 1789, Nourse received a renewal of the commission from President Washington. He retained it till 1829, when he was removed by President Jackson.

† Letters to George Clinton and John Banister. *Sparks's Washington*, Vol. V. pp. 239, 329.

every luxury, accommodated themselves to every privation, and the strife between high and low was only as to which should bear and sacrifice with most cheerfulness.

Colonel Palfrey left camp the first week in April, and was absent in New England till early in July. Head-quarters, when he returned, were at White Plains. Sir Henry Clinton, who had superseded Sir William Howe, had evacuated Philadelphia the 18th of June, and in the sequel of the battle of Monmouth Court House, had pushed his way to New York, where he was now watched by the American forces from the border of Connecticut and the Highlands. Much of the Paymaster-General's attention was given, through the summer and autumn, to the business of the expedition to Rhode Island.\*

The inactive winter which followed was passed by him, from November to May, at Marl-

---

\* Sullivan was one of his many warm friends. On his departure to assume the command, he had written, "Should I be successful, and make the triumphal entry you so earnestly wish, nothing would afford me greater happiness than to see my dear friend Palfrey a sharer with me in the laurels that must be acquired by such an event. I am not a little mortified at a hint in your letter respecting your leaving the service, (if it is a final departure;) but on whatever account you bend your course for Rhode Island, I shall return my thanks to those stars which may conduct you in safety to the department of, dear sir, your most obedient servant,  
J. S."

borough, with his family, the local business of his office being transacted meanwhile at head-quarters, at Middle Brook, by his invaluable assistant, Mr. John Pierce. During the last year, he had at different times made up his mind to quit the service. His pay, which was nominally large, but which of course was received in the wretchedly depreciated currency of the country, was unequal to the support of his family, and he had been obliged to draw largely on the earnings of former years.\* But as often as his pur-

---

\* "When I had the pleasure of seeing you last," he wrote to General Greene, the 14th of January, 1779, "I told you of my intention to quit the service. I do not see how it is possible for me to continue in it on the present footing, or indeed on any footing at all. My family is large, and my children all young; Mrs. P., not of a very hearty constitution, and unable to support the fatigues, which a constant attention to provide for so many naturally requires; and I have

‘Not a male in the house,  
Not so much as a mouse,’

to assist her. Therefore I think, after four years' service, in which I have spent a great part of my original stock for the support of my family, it is high time for me to turn my attention to some way of business to prevent my being a beggar, which must be the case, if I should continue another year in the service. Accordingly, as soon as I can place my family in Boston, which will be in April next, I shall repair to Philadelphia, settle my accounts, and resign my commission."



pose was intimated, it was met with urgent remonstrances in the highest quarters, and for the present he was induced to postpone its execution, in the hope that the speedy approach of peace would put an end to the occasion for the heavy self-denials of patriotism. Before his return to camp, he moved back his family to their house in Boston, from which they had been driven four years before.\*

During the preceding summer, in a visit to Gouverneur Morris, he had suggested to him the plan of what he considered a desirable improvement in the arrangements of the pay-office. His scheme and its advantages cannot be better set forth, than in the following extract

---

\* "Desolate was the dwelling." In the emergencies of the winter of 1775-6, when the people within the town suffered for want of fuel, the distinguished family of loyalists, which occupied his house, besides burning all heavy furniture which they could lay their hands on and did not want for other use, had unhung doors, torn up the floor of the stable, and cut down four fine trees, the cherished ornament of the spot.

Pierce wrote to him, on the 20th of February, from Middle Brook, "The 18th instant we had an elegant entertainment at the Artillery Park, in commemoration of the treaty with France, gentlemen and ladies being collected from several states around us. In the evening, fireworks were exhibited, and a ball closed the whole. *His Excellency opened the ball, and joined the assembly with much mirth and complaisance.*"

from a letter which he soon after addressed to that gentleman.

“When I had the pleasure,” says he, “of seeing you at Moor Hall, you may remember we had some conversation respecting my department. You then agreed that some alteration was necessary.

“It has been the opinion of all the sensible men I have conversed with on the subject, that the grand military chest, and the records belonging to it, should by no means accompany the army; that the Paymaster-General should reside in some central place, and keep his deputies with the army, who should be supplied by him with cash just sufficient to answer their present demands; and that all accounts and vouchers relative to the *pay* of the army should be transmitted to him at proper periods, to be arranged and filed in his office.

“Those who are acquainted with an army know very well that it is impossible to do business with any tolerable degree of regularity in a camp; for, besides their sudden and frequent removals, which subject their papers to great disorder and loss, their quarters are constantly filled with visitants, which greatly impedes the transaction of business. For near a month, when we lay in the Jerseys, quarters were so scarce that I was obliged to keep my office in

my wagon. Judge you, whether it was possible to do business in such a confined situation.

“I therefore humbly conceive, that the payment of the army would be much more regularly conducted, if the Paymaster-General was to reside near the seat of Congress. He would be then in a proper situation to receive the estimates of necessary supplies from his deputies; to make application to Congress for cash, receive the same, and distribute it in proper proportions to the several departments. The pay-rolls and other documents could be properly filed in his office, ready for consultation in case of any difficulty or dispute. The proper returns, being collected from all quarters, would centre in one place, which would prevent that confusion, which must arise from their being distributed in every part of the continent. The Paymaster-General might, at certain times, go round and visit the several departments, examine their military chests, and make such alterations and amendments as should be judged needful.

“Whenever a final settlement of public accounts becomes necessary, (and the day will, sooner or later, most assuredly arrive,) you will find we shall be entangled in a labyrinth of confusion, from whence it will be very difficult to extricate ourselves, and all for want of *method*, and a little attention at the beginning. The

sooner, therefore, the reformation is begun, the easier the task will be. I would not have you imagine, from what I have said, that I propose any advantage to myself from the alteration. The contrary is evident, for I can live at much less expense in camp, than I could in such a city as Philadelphia.

“Our army is now so much detached, that a regulation of this kind is become more necessary than ever. I am not in the cabinet, but common report tells me General Gates is to take up his winter quarters in Hartford, or some other part of New England, and that probably headquarters will be at Fishkill, Lord Stirling at Elizabethtown, &c. &c. &c. In this divided state, it will be exceedingly inconvenient to send fifty or a hundred miles for every trifling payment that may be wanted. I shall therefore be obliged to send a deputy to every division of the army that may be detached from the main body.”

The plan was approved, and on the 29th of May, Congress passed resolves placing the pay-office upon this footing.\* Accordingly, Colonel

---

\* On this occasion Washington wrote to him, “I am fully persuaded it will be a difficult task to collect and properly arrange all the accounts of the army at this late period. But I have no doubt that your industry and care will sur-

Palfrey's post was henceforward at Philadelphia, where Congress held its sessions. Being thus permanently established at one of the most important commercial places on the continent, the benefit of his business talents and experience was sought by his Boston friends; and he again embarked to some extent in commerce and navigation. He undertook the business of the Deane

---

mount every obstacle, and place the business on the footing Congress desire. It is an important and necessary work."

It may not be uninteresting to see upon what system this business was conducted. The following is a copy of Colonel Palfrey's instructions to the Deputy Paymasters-General in the several departments;

"1. You are to pay no warrants, except they are signed by the Commander-in-chief of the army, and certified by the auditors, (where any are appointed.) The Christian and surname of the person in whose favor it is drawn to be inserted, and the particular purpose for which it is paid specified.

"2. The paymasters of regiments are to furnish you with fair and complete pay-rolls of the several companies which constitute the regiment; they are to be signed by the captain or officer commanding the company, the amount of each to be added to the foot of the regimental abstract; the regimental abstract to contain all the field and staff officers of the regiment, to be signed by the colonel or commanding officer, and certified by the brigadier.

"3. In order to avoid confusion in the accounts of the several departments, you are not to pay money, on any account, to any officers acting in the departments of the Quartermaster-General, Commissary-General of purchases or issues, Clothier-General, hospital, navy, or ordnance stores,

and Boston frigates, disposing of vessels captured by them, and distributing their prize-money ; an engagement which brought him into constant correspondence with that eminent naval commander, Commodore Samuel Nicholson.\*

Early in October, he addressed a memorial to Congress, asking leave to resign. It was referred to a committee, and slept in their hands. On the

---

except in cases of great and pressing emergency ; and then it must be done by way of loan, to be repaid out of the first money they receive from the heads of their several departments, by whom alone they are to be supplied.

"4. You are not to advance money *on account* to any officers, except for the recruiting service, or to enable them to join their regiments ; and then you must immediately transmit a particular account of the same to the Deputy Paymaster-General of the army to which their regiment is attached.

"5. You will be careful to compare the pay-rolls with the muster-rolls ; examine to see if they are right cast, and made up agreeable to the resolves.

"6. You are by no means to neglect sending regular monthly returns, in which you are particularly to specify the date of payment, Christian and surname, rank, regiment, and state to which the regiment belongs, and the purposes for which payment is made. If it is for regimental pay, you are to mention the time of commencement and ending."

\* This was, perhaps, not an unusual resource of officers of rank. Colonel Pickering, in like manner, had charge of the business of the *Galatea*, while residing at Philadelphia as Quartermaster-General.

13th of November, having received intelligence of the dangerous illness of his only daughter, he repeated the request. On the 15th, Congress voted that he should "have leave of absence to visit his family; that he should receive twenty thousand dollars, as a further compensation for his past services;" and "that, until the further order of Congress, the Paymaster-General to the armies of the United States be allowed at the rate of fourteen thousand dollars per annum."

These were agreeable tokens of the public confidence, but did not meet the exigency of the case. He was at the same time paying for his board, in Philadelphia, at the rate of ten thousand four hundred dollars a year. He again applied for permission to retire from the service; but his inclination was overruled, and, under his unlimited leave of absence, he set out on his journey homewards. "I have sacrificed my domestic happiness," he wrote, "to contribute, as far as lay in my power, towards establishing the freedom and independence of my country."

After a winter of anxiety and grief at Boston, occasioned by the long illness of a daughter beloved with a most tender affection, and the fatal illness of a promising son, he returned to Philadelphia the last of April. The routine of his office through this summer was only diver-

sified by embarrassments and vexations growing out of the wretchedly depressed condition of the currency. The depreciation of the continental paper money, which had begun about the middle of the year 1777, had advanced, by the winter of 1779-80, to the rate of twenty-seven or twenty-eight for one; and in the first four or five months of the latter year, went down to fifty or sixty. The successive emissions had amounted to two hundred millions of dollars, and the time at which the credit of the states had been pledged, for the payment of the first instalment, had come and gone without means having been furnished for the redemption of the bills. Before the end of the year they sank to the rate of one hundred and fifty for one, and soon after almost ceased to circulate any where, at any discount. Meanwhile, the public coffers were very scantily supplied by foreign or domestic loans.\*

The Paymaster-General was consequently subjected to new annoyances of three different kinds.

---

\* In the flush of early confidence in this currency, Nourse had written to the Paymaster-General, "The presses and signers are hard at work, and there will be plenty of money for the army while oakum and lampblack hold out." He had some lessons in political economy to learn. In the autumn of 1780, the subject of this memoir is found giving three hundred and sixty-nine pounds for three loaves of



He could not get from the Board of Treasury the funds necessary for the expenditure of his department. Much of what he did get was often withdrawn, as soon as it could reach his deputies, for the use of other departments of the service. And the nominal pay, which kept the word of promise to the eye of the poor soldier, being much lighter in his pocket than the coin it professed to represent, naturally provoked dissatisfaction, which he who made the distribution could do no more than witness and lament.

In July, he had occasion to represent to the Treasury Board, that the pay of the main army was more than six months in arrears, the greatest part of the money recently issued for its use having been stopped on its way to the regiments, and "swallowed up in the insatiable gulf of the Quartermaster-General's department." The Board were unable to apply a remedy, the paymasters with the armies not being at liberty to refuse the warrants of their respective commanding officers; and, in short, there was nothing to do with the evil, but to worry

---

sugar, and seven hundred dollars for a beaver hat. Some months earlier, he had paid four hundred and eighty dollars a week for board. For a while, this used to be called the extraordinary rise in the price of articles. It is as hard to understand that money is falling, as that the shore is not receding from a vessel under way.

along with it as well as might be, and hope for better times.

Through the improvements introduced in 1779, the operations of the pay-office, as far as they depended on its internal arrangements, had been reduced to so perfect a system, that nothing but punctuality and exactness was any longer needed for carrying them on. The eminent business talents of Colonel Palfrey were now wanted by the country in another place. The financial affairs of the United States, in Europe, had become complicated, having never been adjusted since the beginning of the war. Money, for the purchase of supplies of clothing, arms, and ammunition, had been furnished by France; but the care of purchasing and forwarding the supplies had hitherto fallen on the minister. Bills were drawn on him by Congress, which he had to accept and negotiate; and as yet it had belonged to him to see to the refitting of American ships of war, and the disposal of the prizes, which found their way into French ports. In the autumn of 1779, Dr. Franklin, then minister, had represented to Congress his "small skill in accounts," and his wish that his "time and attention were not taken up by any concerns in mercantile affairs.\*

---

\* Sparks's *Franklin*, Vol. VIII. pp. 385, 386, 426. It is easy to infer, from another letter of Franklin, (Vol. VIII. p.

Congress, accordingly, on the 25th of October, 1780, adopted a resolve, "that it is necessary to obtain, as far as possible, the supplies of clothing, medicines, arms, and ammunition, requested from his Most Christian Majesty on loan; as well as, without loss of time, to import such of the clothing and other articles as have been granted or purchased in France for the public use; and that, for these and other purposes, a consul be appointed to reside in France, whose duty it shall be, in addition to his consular functions, to receive and forward all supplies to be obtained in that kingdom for the use of the United States, and to assist in directing our naval affairs."\* It was further the intention of Congress to charge this officer with the liquidation and settlement of all accounts of the United States in Europe, including those of all persons intrusted there with the expenditure of public money.†

Colonel Palfrey was appointed Consul-General in France, by a unanimous vote of Congress, taken by ballot on the 4th of November, 1780.

---

320,) that, by obtaining the appointment of a person at once of business habits and conciliating address, to supersede all other agents of the country in such affairs, it was his object to guard against the frequent annoyances and failures occasioned by Arthur Lee's unhappy temper.

\* Secret Journal of Congress, Vol. II. p. 342.

† Journal of Congress, November 18th, 1782.

In his letter of the 9th, accepting the appointment, he requested that the Board of Treasury might be directed to proceed immediately, out of course, to the settlement of his accounts as Paymaster-General, "duty to the public, and a regard to his own reputation, and the future ease of his family, not suffering him," he said, "to leave America until this business is fully and finally accomplished."\* This was accordingly done, and his discharge under the seal of the treasury office was executed on the 19th of December. His commission and instructions bear the date of the 9th of the same month.† They confer materially larger powers than those proposed in the resolve passed before the election.

While preparing for his voyage, he received from all quarters the most cordial letters of congratulation and leave-taking. It is touching to see what a warm attachment the consistent course of a kind and upright man had created in numerous persons, from his superiors and subordinates,‡ and others who had the most intimate opportunities to know his worth, to such as had

---

\* "Since Arnold's villany has been discovered," he wrote to a friend, "all persons who have handled public money are suspected, and I want to convince the public that they have had at least one honest servant."

† Secret Journal, Vol. II. pp. 352-354.

‡ "A principal," wrote Pierce, his chief deputy, "whose ability and inclination can never be replaced by another."

been unconnected with him except in the transient relations of business. Time could not be allowed him to go to New England and take leave of his family, as it was thought necessary he should be immediately in France, in order to forward supplies against the opening of the next campaign.

His last letters to his wife are worn with use, and illegible. On the 20th of December, he went down to Chester to embark on board the *Shillala*, an armed ship of sixteen guns. On the 23d he put on shore, at Wilmington, a few lines of farewell to his family. This was the last of William Palfrey. The *Shillala* was never heard of, after she left the Capes.\*

The country has had many more famous servants than he was, whose life these pages record, but none better suited to, or more faithful in, the posts which she has summoned them to fill. Washington, through whose family he passed to his higher public trusts, was apt to know who it was that he employed. His place, if it did not find exercise for those higher intellectual attributes which bequeath a man to

---

\* Barlow has some lines in the *Columbiad* (Book I. l. 627) referring to the supposed manner of her loss.

“Say, Palfrey, brave, good man, was this thy doom?” &c.

fame, called for integrity, diligence, exactness, decision, and urbanity. Every body praised him as a model of all these qualities ; and, not least, of the last, which, under the circumstances, may not have been the easiest. To be perpetually and importunately solicited for what he had not to furnish, the Commissary-General on the one side, and the Quartermaster-General on the other, each pleading for an advance of hundreds of thousands, and four or five scores of regimental paymasters, all in full cry for their smaller claims, may seem enough to have driven some patient natures mad.

From time to time, some heady colonel would give the Commander-in-chief to understand that the liberties of the country were in hopeless peril, because he could not get an allowance from the Paymaster-General for recruiting and foraging. But they generally ended by being ashamed of their testiness. His well known assiduity, promptness, and method in business, gave assurance, that if all was not done that might be desired, it was not through any failure on his part ; and his good temper and good humor beguiled and amused the discontent, which he wanted the means to satisfy ; so that all accounts agree, that no officer was personally more a favorite with the army, than he whose empty chest too often kept them unclad and sta . . .

Those who acted with him on the stage of public affairs are now all departed. The writer of this sketch has heard him spoken of by many of them, as by Mr. Madison, who parted from him at his embarkation, General Lafayette, Colonel Pickering, Governor Brooks, General Lewis, James Lovell; and always in terms indicating an impression, on the mind of the speaker, such as is only made by a character of mark.

His person was well proportioned and graceful, though scarcely of the middle height; "his countenance open and expressive;" his manners "free and cheerful." \* "I recollect him well," writes Harrison Gray Otis; "but the reminiscences of boyhood, extending from eight to ten years of age, can be no other than meagre and defective. His person was of the middle size, his countenance animated, his gait quick, with a military air, his manner genteel and commanding, and his deportment to me, as a boy, condescending and affable. I also think I remember the sound of his voice, clear and sonorous; and his image is before me as that of a gentleman of the old school, polite, manly, and elegant."

---

\* These expressions are taken from a letter from Joseph Nourse to the writer, in 1835.

His domestic affections were the tenderest and most active. Friendships seemed to be every where seeking him out, and his heart, his time, and his purse, were his friend's. He loved to oblige and serve; graceful acts of generosity and courtesy were his habit; neighbors resorted to him freely for good offices, which his intelligence and influence qualified him to render; and the numerous applications of strangers always received a prompt and kind attention. He took the sweet of life with a joyous gratitude, and the bitter with a devout and hopeful resignation. He was careful to do right, and found no difficulty in trusting Providence. On the whole, he was no bad specimen of a brave, upright, pains-taking, kind-hearted, capable, faithful, public-spirited, God-fearing, New England man.


In his will, witnessed on the 11th of December, 1780, in Philadelphia, by Samuel Adams, James Lovell, Timothy Penny, and Artemas Ward, "all the remainder of my estate," he says, "real, personal, and mixed, I give to my dearly beloved wife Susannah, at the same time bearing a testimony (which will appear when I shall be no more) of the grateful sense I have of her constant and invariable affection and attachment to me, and of the love I shall bear to her or her memory until the last moment of



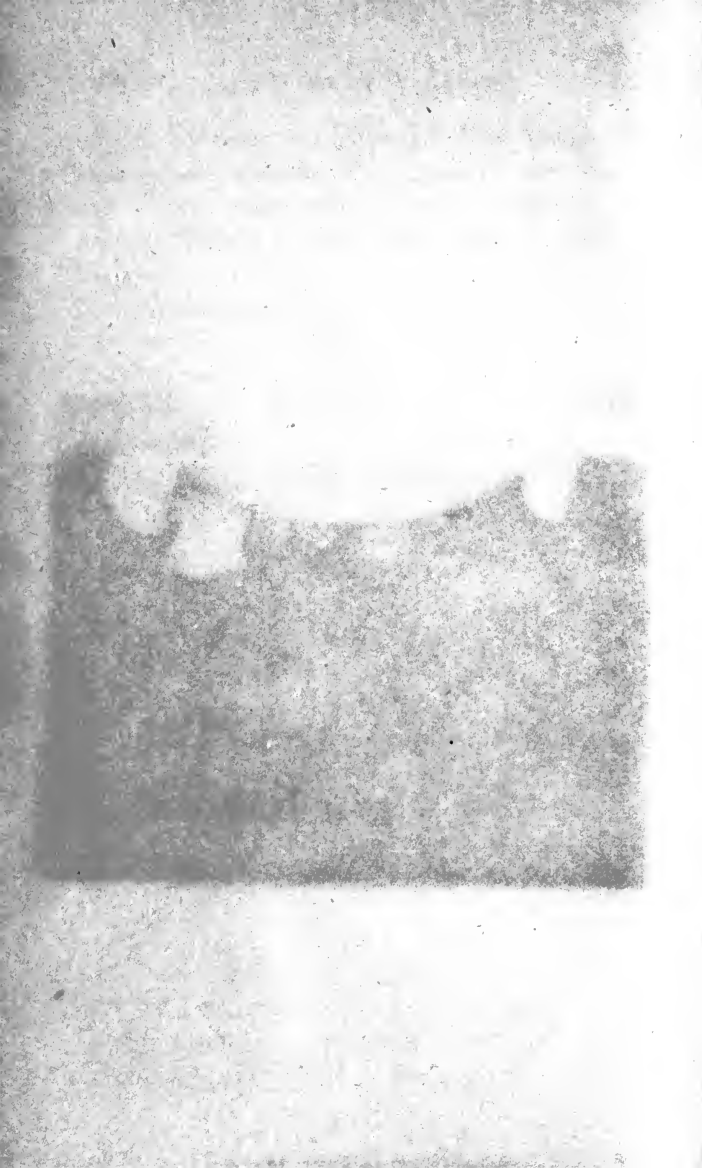
my existence." He left ten or twelve hundred pounds sterling, in addition to an estate, half of which he had inherited, in Water Street, Boston. Such were the pecuniary gains in the public service, rather, such was the portion of earlier earnings saved from sacrifice to the public service, by a man selected for it from all the country, by reason of his possessing, in a pre-eminent degree, the talents which amass fortunes when they are devoted to private use.

In 1792, his widow married Mr. Constant Freeman, father of the late Colonel Constant Freeman, of the army, and of the Reverend Dr. James Freeman, of Boston. She deceased on the 20th of July, 1793. Of eight children, five died in infancy and childhood. Two sons and a daughter survived him. He had destined his sons for professional life, and their studies had been directed to that purpose; but their prospects were changed by their orphanage. The eldest, William, a man of abilities, information, and character, but not of an enterprising spirit, was a clerk in the Boston Custom House from early manhood to his death, in 1820. John, the second son, in early life a merchant in Demerara, and afterwards a shipmaster and merchant in Boston, removed, in 1804, to the then recently purchased territory of Louisiana, where he died, in the autumn of 1843, at his plantation

of Isle l'Abbaye, St. Martin's. The daughter, Susan, still remembered by many persons as one of the most brilliant women of her time, married William Lee; resided fourteen years at Bourdeaux, in France, where her husband had been appointed consul by Mr. Jefferson; then six years at Washington, where he was an Auditor in the treasury department; and died at Schooley's Mountain, in New Jersey, in the year 1822.









**HOME USE  
CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT  
MAIN LIBRARY**

This book is due on the last date stamped below.  
1-month loans may be renewed by calling 642-3405.  
6-month loans may be recharged by bringing books  
to Circulation Desk.

Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior  
to due date.

**ALL BOOKS ARE SUBJECT TO RECALL 7 DAYS  
AFTER DATE CHECKED OUT.**

JUL 30 1975 5 7

RETURNED TO  
ANTHRO LIB.

AUTO. DISC.

SEP 24 1986

APR 17 1975

REC. CIR. APR 18 '75

OCT 29 1975 3

REC. CIR. OCT 16 '75

OCT 16 1986 11

LD21—A—40m—12,'74  
(S2700L)

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

GENERAL LIBRARY - U.C. BERKELEY



8000895593

EMK

271

17

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

